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THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
J. ARMSTRONG, M. D.
WITH
THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

Cooke's Edition.

Daughter of Pæon, queen of ev'ry joy,
Hygeia! — O descend
Thou cheerful Guardian of the rolling year! —
Without thy cheerful active energy
No rapture swells the breast, no poet sings,
No more the Maids of Helicon delight.
Come then with me, O Goddess heav'nly gay,
Begin the song, and let it sweetly flow. —
— With thy aid the secret wilds I trace
Of Nature, and with daring steps proceed
Thro' paths the Muses never trod before.

Art of Health.

EMBELLISHED WITH SUPERB ENGRAVINGS.

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Great Britain.

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THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
JOHN ARMSTRONG, M.D.

CONTAINING HIS

ART OF HEALTH,
IN FOUR BOOKS,

BENEVOLENCE, AN EPISTLE,

TASTE, AN EPISTLE,

IMIT. OF SHAKESPEARE,

IMIT. OF SPENSER,

&c. &c. &c.

Not in vain such Labours have we try'd
If ought these Lays the fickle Health confirm,
To you, ye Delicate! I write, for you
I tame my youth to philosophic cares,
And grow still paler by the midnight lamps.

Art of Health.

PRINTED AND EMBELLISHED
Under the Direction of
C. COOKE.

PHYSICAL WORLD

JOHN J. WESTON, M.D.

ALL OF US ARE INTERESTED IN THE PHYSICAL WORLD, AND THE STUDY OF IT IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT OF OUR DUTIES. IT IS THE STUDY OF THE LAWS OF NATURE, AND OF THE MANNER IN WHICH THEY ARE APPLIED IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE UNIVERSE.

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LIFE OF ARMSTRONG.

JOHNS ARMSTRONG was born at Castleton, in Roxburghshire, North Britain, about the year 1709. His father and brother were Ministers of the Church of Scotland, and much respected as able divines and valuable members of society. Our Author, having passed through the ordinary course of classical education, was sent to complete his studies to the University of Edinburgh, where he applied himself to the cultivation of the several branches of philosophy and medicine, under the respective professors; and from the reputation he had acquired he obtained the degree of Doctor of Physic, Feb. 4, 1732. He soon afterwards came to London, and entered upon the practice of physic; but never attained to an eminence of popularity in his profession, being more successful in his poetical than medical capacity.

In 1735, he published an anonymous pamphlet, entitled "An Essay for abridging the Study of Physic, to which is added, a Dialogue betwixt Hygeia, Mercury, and Plato, relating to the practice of physic, as it is managed by a certain illustrious Society;" and an Epistle from Uibec, the Persian, to Joshua Ward, Esq. with a Dedication "To the Academic Philosophers, to the Generous Despisers of the Schools, to the deservedly celebrated Joshua Ward, John Moor, and the rest of the numerous sect of inspired physicians." This fugitive piece intended to satirize the empirics of the day, among whom Ward had attained to the highest degree of popularity, and been patronized by the King, contains much wit and pleasantry, and the Dialogue, in the opinion of the literati, possesses a great degree of the spirit of Lucian.

In 1737, he published a "Synopsis of the History and Cure of the Venereal Disease:" inscribed to Dr. Alexander Stuart, in a dedication, representing that professor as "a person who had an indisputable right to judge severely of the performance presented to him."

The same year he produced his celebrated Poem, called "The Economy of Love," which has much merit; though it partakes in too great a degree of the licentiousness of Ovid, from whose work of the Art of Love, the design appears to have been taken. The Poem passed through many Editions, more, there is reason to apprehend, to the emolument of the bookseller, than the benefit of the reader. In justice, however, to the character of the Author, it is to be observed, that, when his judgment ripened with his years, it underwent a revision,

in 1768, and many of the luxuriancies of youthful fancy were expunged.

In 1744, he published "The Art of Preserving Health, a Didactic Poem," a work in which the critics admit there is a classical correctness and closeness of style that are truly admirable. This Poem laid the foundation of his fame, and will be a lasting monument of his poetical talents, as well as skill in the medical Art.

In 1746, he was appointed one of the physicians to the Hospital, for lame and sick soldiers, behind Buckingham House; and, in the course of a few years, produced several little pieces, among which were a Poem "on Benevolence," and another called "Taste, an Epistle to a Young Critic;" soon after which he was complimented in an elegant Ode, addressed to him by Dr. Theobald. — His Sketches or Essays on Various Subjects, by Launcelot Temple, Esq. being replete with humour, and indicating a general knowledge of mankind, had a very rapid sale; he is shrewdly suspected of having derived much assistance in this work from the abilities of his friend Mr. Wilkes.

Soon after he was appointed physician to the army in Germany, which was in 1760, he wrote a Poem called "Day, an Epistle to John Wilkes, of Aylesbury, Esq." It appears from the prefatory advertisement, that it was published without the knowledge or consent of the Author, or of his friend to whom it is addressed. In this poem he wantonly hazarded a reflection on Churchill, which drew on him the vengeance of that severe Satirist. The reflection is contained in the following lines:

- "What news to day? I ask you not what rogue,
- "What paltry imp of fortune's now in vogue,
- "What forward blundering fool was last prefer'd,
- "By mere pretence distinguish'd from the herd:
- "With what new cheat the gaping town is smit,
- "What *crazy* scribbler reigns the present wit;
- "What stuff for winter the two Booths have mixt,
- "What bouncing mimic gives a Rosciad next,

Churchill incensed at this reflection on his first and favourite Poem of the "Rosciad," took occasion in his last piece, "The Journey," after referring to those who had hinted that he should "run his flock of genius out," to conclude the catalogue of some contemporary writers who had obtained what he thought unmerited celebrity, with these pointed lines upon Armstrong.

- "Let them with *Armstrong*, taking leave of sense,
- "Read musty lectures on *Benevolence*;

" Or con the pages of his gaping *Day*,
 " Where all his former fame was thrown away ;
 " Where all but barren labour was forgot,
 " And the vain stiffness of a letter'd Scot.
 " Let them with Armstrong pass the term of light,
 " But not one hour of darkness, when the night
 " Suspends this mortal coil, when memory wakes,
 " When for our past misdoings conscience takes
 " A deep revenge : when by reflection led
 " She draws his curtain, and looks comfort dead,
 " Let every Muse be gone ; in vain he turns
 " And tries to pray for sleep ; an *Ætna* burns,
 " A more than *Ætna* in his coward breast,
 " And guilt with vengeance arm'd forbids him rest ;
 " Though soft as plumage from young Zephyr's wing,
 " His couch seems hard, and no relief can bring,
 " *Ingratitude* hath planted daggers there,
 " No good man can deserve, no brave man bear."

It is observed by a friend of Armstrong, that he certainly afforded " the original cause of offence, but the retaliation was unjustifiably severe. Armstrong was incapable of the crime with which he is charged, and the imputation of ingratitude will never obscure the character of a humane, benevolent, kindly-affectioned man of genius, whose great offence was his attachment to the party in opposition to Mr. Wilkes and his friends." Nothing, indeed, has proved more fatal to the intercourse of friends than a disagreement in politics. The intimacy which had subsisted between Armstrong and Wilkes was certainly interrupted, if not dissolved, by the demon of party.

When the peace was concluded in 1763, he quitted the army, and resumed the practice of physic, in London ; which, from his indolence and inactivity, as was generally supposed, never tended much to his emolument. Armstrong was a man of extensive knowledge, and a liberal turn of mind, and could not submit to the mean arts of insinuation and cajoling, to conciliate the favour of old nurses and gossips, which have often proved effectual in recommending young practitioners. He was rather disposed to pass his time at home in reading and study, and to spend his evenings in the society of men of genius and learning, by which means he might at once receive and communicate useful and entertaining knowledge and instruction.

In 1770, he published a collection of *Miscellanies*, containing the pieces he had formerly produced separately, except the *Economy*

Economy of Love, and Day, with Imitations of Shakspeare, and Spencer, the Universal Almanack, by Nouradain Ali, The Forced Marriage, a Tragedy, Sketches, &c.

In an advertisement to his collection, he says he "has at last taken the trouble upon him to collect them, and to have them printed under his own inspection, a task that he had long avoided, and to which he would hardly have submitted himself at last, but for the fear of their being some time hereafter, exposed in a ragged, mangled condition, and loaded with more faults than they originally had, when it might be possible for him, by the change perhaps of one letter, to recover a whole period from the most contemptible nonsense. Along with such pieces as he had formerly offered the public, he took this opportunity of presenting it with several others; some of which had lain by him many years. What he has lost, and especially what he has destroyed, would probably enough have been better received by the great majority of readers than any thing he has published. But he never courted the public. He wrote chiefly for his own amusement; and because he found it an agreeable and innocent way of sometimes spending an idle hour. He has always most heartily despised the *mobility*, from the lowest to the highest; and, if it is true, what he has sometimes been told, that the best judges are on his side, he desires no more in the article of fame and renown as a writer. If the best judges of this age honour him with their approbation, all the worst too of the next will favour him with their's, when, by Heaven's grace, he will be too far beyond the reach of their unmeaning praises to receive any disgust from them."

His Sketches and Essays discover genius and learning; but their merits are eclipsed by the introduction of vulgar phrases, and scurrilous epithets.—

His Tragedy of the *Forced Marriage* was offered to Garrick for representation on the stage; but refused by him without assigning any reason—There is some animation in this piece; but it does not appear to be conducted with much judgment.

In 1771, he produced a work entitled, *A Short Ramble through some parts of France and Italy, by Launcelot Temple, Esq.* and, in 1773, a Pamphlet in his own name, called *Medical Essays*. This little sketch, in which he states the causes of his not being so popular in his profession as many practitioners, and amongst others cites his not being able to employ the usual means of flattery and cajoling, from an inherent pride and an excess of sensibility. He complains much of the illiberality of some of his brethren, and the severity of the critics, and particularly of the reviewers.

He died in September 1779, and, to the surprise of his friends,

friends, left behind him upwards of 3000*l.* saved by great parsimony out of a very moderate income, arising principally out of his half-pay.

No Edition of his Miscellanies has been called for since his death; but his "Art of Preserving Health," has been frequently reprinted, and with his other poetical pieces, except the "Economy of Love," was received into the Edition of English Poets, in 1790. It was omitted from its immoral tendency, and we have rejected it from the same motive.

The following Verses on the death of Dr. Armstrong, appeared in one of the public prints soon after that event.

"Ye swains of *Liddal*, as you drive your sheep,
 "To verdant pastures, or the russet steep;
 "If yet a Muse on *Liddal*'s banks remain,
 "For tuneful Armstrong make the plaintive strain.
 "Tho' from you long, long from the limpid wave,
 "In which he lov'd his infant limbs to lave:
 "Long from the pool, where oit' with mimic fly,
 "He patient angled for the silver try;
 "Yet were his manners artless as your own,
 "As plain as he the world had never known.
 "The world he scorn'd, for well he knew to scorn
 "The crooked views of narrow minded man.
 "Ye sons of *Galen*, tho' he lack'd not skill
 "Like you, by slow and secret means to kill,
 "He sought to save, he sought to heal the frame,
 "And breath'd *Nepenthe* in poetic flame.
 "From breezy summit, or fair op'ning lawn,
 "He bade his patients hail the cheertul dawn;
 "Their villas build wide from the marshy mead,
 "But chief where bees on fragrant wild thyme feed:
 "As death itself avoid the smoaky town;
 "Resist th' enfeebling luxury of down:
 "Far from the breast all rankling cares expel,
 "And there invite content, and hope to dwell."

The character of Armstrong was amiable, and of course respectable. He was the intimate friend of Thomson, and his coadjutor in the composition of his admirable Poem, "The Castle of Indolence;" stanza the sixty-eighth was written by Armstrong. "Though the Doctor (Thomson writes his friend) Paterfon, increases in his business, he does not decrease in spleen; but there is a certain kind of spleen that is both humane and agreeable, like Jaques in the play." Thomson has described his absent moods in the "Castle of Indolence," stanza ten.

"With

- “ With him was sometimes join’d in silent walk,
 “ Profoundly silent, for they never spoke,
 “ One shyler still, who quite detested talk,
 “ Oft’ stang by spleen, at once away he broke
 “ To groves of pine, and broad o’erhadowing oak ;
 “ There inly thrill’d, he wander’d all alone,
 “ And on himself his pensive fury woke ;
 “ He never utter’d word, save when first shone
 “ The glittering star of eve—thank Heav’n the day is
 done.—

The Doctor lived in habits of intimacy with most of the men of wit and learning in his time; amongst whom were Dr. Grainger, Sir John Pringle, Mr. Fuseli, and others.

Dr. Johnson’s Life of Armstrong can hardly be called even a Sketch, as he speaks of him very little as an Author, and not at all as a man. His name is mentioned very respectably by several characters eminent for their professional and literary abilities.

Dr. Cuming, of Dorchester, in a letter to a friend, speaks of him in the following terms: “ I was early acquainted with Dr. Armstrong, have often visited him at his lodgings, knew many of his intimates, have met him in company; but from my having visited the metropolis so seldom since my residence in Dorsetshire, I was not so well acquainted with him as I should otherwise have been, or wished to be. He always appeared to me (and I was confirmed in that opinion by that of his most intimate friends) a man of learning and genius, of considerable abilities in his profession, of great benevolence and goodness of heart; and therefore totally unqualified to employ the means that usually lead to medical employment, or elbow his way through a crowd of competitors.”—

His *Art of Preserving Health*, on account of the reputation it has so justly acquired, precludes all criticism. It is of the highest species of didactic poetry, and of a merit and character so great, as to rank with the compositions of Lucretius, Horace, Virgil, Boileau, Akenfide, Dyer, and Grainger. Akenfide has attempted the most rich and poetical form of didactic writing in his “ Pleasures of Imagination,” and in several parts succeeded happily, and displayed much genius. Armstrong has not aimed at so high a strain as Akenfide; but he is more equal, and maintains throughout a chaste and correct elegance.

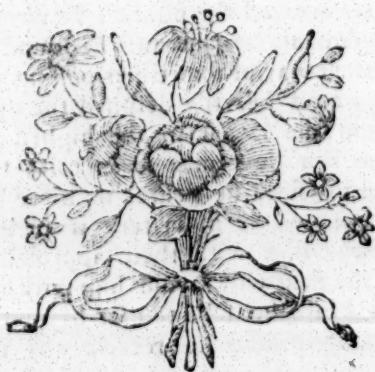
“ To describe so difficult a thing gracefully and poetically, (says Dr. Warton, in his *Reflections on Didactic Poetry*,) as the effects of a distemper on a human body, was reserved for Dr. Armstrong, who accordingly hath nobly executed it at the
 end

end of his Third Book of his *Art of Preserving Health*, where he hath given us that pathetic account of the Sweating Sickness. There is a classical correctness and closeness of stile in this Poem, that are truly admirable, and the subject is raised and adorned by numberless poetical images."

"Of all the poetical performances on this subject, (says Dr. Mackenzie, in his History of Health,) that have come to my hands, Dr. Armstrong's *Art of Preserving Health* is by far the best. To quote every charming description and beautiful passage of this Poem, one must transcribe the whole. We cannot, however, expect new rules where the principal design was to raise and warm the heart into a compliance with the solid precepts of the ancients, which he has enforced with great strength and elegance." The Doctor concludes his eulogium with remarking that, "upon the whole, he has convinced us by his own example, that we ought not to blame antiquity for acknowledging

"One power of physic, melody, and song."

Finis.



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author of the following Pieces has at last taken the trouble upon him to collect them, and to have them printed under his own inspection, a task that he had long avoided, and to which he would hardly have submitted himself at last but for the sake of preventing their being, some time hereafter, exposed in a ragged mangled condition, and loaded with more faults than they originally had, while it might be impossible for him, by the change perhaps of one letter, to recover a whole period from the most contemptible nonsense.

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THE
ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.
IN FOUR BOOKS.

FIRST PUBLISHED IN THE YEAR 1744.

BOOK I. AIR.

DAUGHTER of Pæon, queen of ev'ry joy,
Hygeia!* whose indulgent smile sustains
The various race luxuriant Nature pours,
And on th' immortal essences bestows
Immortal youth, auspicious O descend
Thou cheerful Guardian of the rolling year!
Whether thou wanton'st on the western gale
Or shak'st the rigid pinions of the north,
Diffusest life and vigour thro' the tracks
Of air, thro' earth and ocean's deep domain. 10
When thro' the blue serenity of heav'n
Thy pow'r approaches, all the wasteful host
Of Pain and Sickness, squalid and deform'd,
Confounded sink into the loathsome gloom,
Where in deep Erebus involv'd, the fiends 15
Grow more profane. Whatever shapes of death,
Shook from the hideous chambers of the globe,
Swarm thro' the shudd'ring air; whatever plagues
Or meagre Famine breeds, or with slow wings
Rise from the putrid wat'ry element, 20
The damp waste forest, motionless and rank,
That smothers earth, and all the breathless winds,
Or the vile carnage of th' inhuman field;
Whatever baneful breathes the rotten south;
Whatever ill's th' extremes or sudden change 25
Of cold and hot or moist and dry produce,
They fly thy pure effulgence, they and all
The secret poisons of avenging Heav'n,
And all the pale tribes halting in the train
Of Vice and heedless Pleasure; or if aught 30

* Hygeia the goddess of Health was, according to the genealogy of the
Fætheren deities, the daughter of Æsculapius, who as well as Apollo was dis-
tinguished by the name of Pæon.

The comet's glare amid the burning sky,
Mournful eclipse, or planets ill combin'd,
Portend disastrous to the vital world,
Thy salutary pow'r averts their rage,
Averts the gen'ral bane; and but for thee 35
Nature would sicken, Nature soon would die.

Without thy cheerful active energy
No rapture swells the breast, no poet sings,
No more the maids of Helicon delight.
Come then with me O Goddess heav'nly gay! 40
Begin the song, and let it sweetly flow,
And let it wisely teach thy wholesome laws;
How best the sickle fabric to support
"Of mortal man; in healthful body how
"A healthful mind the longest to maintain."
'Tis hard in such a strife of rules to chuse 45
The best, and those of most extensive use;
Harder in clear and animated song,
Dry philosophic precepts to convey:
Yet with thy aid the secret wilds I trace 50
Of Nature, and with daring steps proceed
Thro' paths the Muses never trod before.

Nor should I wander doubtful of my way
Had I the lights of that sagacious mind
Which taught to check the pestilential fire, 55
And quell the deadly Python of the Nile.
O thou belov'd by all the graceful arts,
Thou long the fav'rite of the Healing Pow'rs,
Indulge O Mead! a well-design'd Essay,
Howe'er imperfect, and permit that I 60
My little knowledge with my country share,
Till you the rich Asclepian stores unlock,
And with new graces dignify the theme.

Ye who amid this feverish world would wear
A body free of pain, of cares a mind, 65
Fly the rank city, shun its turbid air,
Breathe not the chaos of eternal smoke
And volatile corruption, from the dead,
The dying, sick'ning, and the living, world
Exhal'd, to sully Heav'n's transparent dome 70

ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.

15

With dim mortality. It is not air
 That from a thousand lungs reeks back to thine,
 Sated with exhalations rank and fell,
 The spoil of dunghills, and the putrid thaw
 Of Nature, when from shape and texture she
 Relapses into fighting elements;
 It is not Air, but floats a nauseous mass
 Of all obscene, corrupt, offensive, things.
 Much moisture hurts; but here a sordid bath,
 With oily rancour fraught, relaxes more
 The solid frame than simple moisture can.
 Besides, immur'd in many a sullen bay
 That never felt the freshness of the breeze,
 This slumb'ring deep remains, and ranker grows
 With sickly rest; and (tho' the lungs abhor
 To drink the dun fuliginous abyss)
 Did not the acid vigour of the mine,
 Roll'd from so many thund'ring chimnies, tame
 The putrid steams that overwarm the sky,
 This caustic venom would perhaps corrode
 Those tender cells that draw the vital Air,
 In vain with all their unctuous rills bedew'd,
 Or by the drunken venous tubes that yawn
 In countless pores o'er all the pervious skin
 Imbib'd, would poison the balsamic blood,
 And rouse the heart to ev'ry fever's rage.
 While yet you breathe away; the rural wilds
 Invite, the mountains call you, and the vales,
 The woods, the streams, and each ambrosial breeze
 That fans the ever-undulating sky,
 A kindly sky! whose soft'ring pow'r regales
 Man, beast, and all the vegetable reign.
 Find then some woodland scene where Nature smiles
 Benign, where all her honest children thrive.
 To us there wants not many a happy seat:
 Look round the smiling land, such numbers rise
 We hardly fix, bewilder'd in our choice.
 See where enthron'd in adamantine state,
 Proud of her bards, imperial Windfor sits;
 There chuse thy seat, in some aspiring grove

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Fast by the slowly winding Thames, or where
 Broader the laves fair Richmond's green retreats,
 (Richmond! that sees an hundred villas rise
 Rural or gay.) O from the summer's rage,
 O wrap me in the friendly gloom that hides 115
 Umbrageous Ham!—But if the busy Town
 Attract thee still to toil for pow'r or gold,
 Sweetly thou may'st thy vacant hours possess
 In Hampstead, courted by the western wind,
 Or Greenwich, waving o'er the winding flood, 120
 Or lose the world amid the sylvan wilds
 Of Dulwich, yet by barb'rous arts unspoil'd.
 Green rise the Kentish hills in cheerful Air;
 But on the marshy plains that Lincoln spreads
 Build not, nor rest too long thy wand'ring feet; 125
 For on a rustic throne of dewy turf,
 With baneful fogs her aking temples bound,
 Quartana there presides, a meagre fiend.
 Begot by Eurus, when his brutal force
 Compreis'd the slothful Naiad of the Fens. 130
 From such a mixture sprung this fitful pest
 With fev'rish blasts subdues the sick'ning land:
 Cold tremors come, with mighty love of rest,
 Convulsive yawnings, lassitude, and pains,
 That sting the burden'd brows, fatigue the loins, 135
 And rack the joints, and ev'ry torpid limb,
 Then parching heat succeeds till copious sweats
 O'erflow, a short relief from former ills:
 Beneath repeated shocks the wretches pine;
 The vigour sinks, the habit melts away, 140
 The cheerful, pure, and animated bloom
 Dies from the face, with squalid Atrophy
 Devour'd, in fallow melancholy clad,
 And oft the sorc'ers in her sated wrath
 Resigns them to the Furies of her train, 145
 The bloated Hydrops, and the yellow fiend
 Ting'd with her own accumulated gall.
 In quest of sites avoid the mournful plain,
 Where osiers thrive, and trees that love the lake,
 Where many lazy muddy rivers flow; 150

Nor for the wealth that all the Indies roll
 Fix near the marshy margin of the main;
 For from the humid soil, and wat'ry reign
 Eternal vapours rise; the spongy air
 For ever weeps, or turgid with the weight 155
 Of waters pours a sounding deluge down.
 Skies such as these let ev'ry mortal shun,
 Who dreads the dropfy, palsy, or the gout,
 Tertian, corrosive scurvy, or moist catarrh,
 Or any other injury that grows 160
 From raw spun fibres, idle and unstrung,
 Skin ill perspiring, and the purple flood
 In languid eddies loit'ring into phlegm.

Yet not alone from humid skies we pine,
 For Air may be too dry. The subtil heav'n, 165
 That winnows into dust the blasted downs,
 Bare and extended wide without a stream,
 Too fast imbibes th' attenuated lymph
 Which by the surface from the blood exhales;
 The lungs grow rigid, and with toil essay 170
 Their flexible vibrations, or inflam'd
 Their tender ever moving structure thaws:
 Spoil'd of its limpid vehicle the blood
 A mass of lees remains, a drossy tide
 That slow as Lethe wanders thro' the veins 175
 Unactive in the services of life,
 Unfit to lead its pitchy current thro'
 The secret mazy channels of the brain:
 The melancholic fiend (that worst despair
 Of physic) hence the rust complexion'd man 180
 Pursues whose blood is dry, whose fibres gain
 Too stretch'd a tone; and hence in climes adust
 So sudden tumults seize the trembling nerves,
 And burning fevers glow with double rage.

Fly if you can these violent extremes 185
 Of Air; the wholesome is nor moist nor dry.
 But as the pow'r of chusing is deny'd
 To half mankind a further task ensues,
 How best to mitigate these fell extremes,
 How breathe unhurt the with'ring element,

Or hazy atmosphere; tho' custom moulds
 To ev'ry clime the soft Promethean clay,
 And he who first the fogs of Essex breath'd
 (So kind is native Air) may in the Fens
 Of Essex from inveterate ills revive 195
 At pure Montpelier or Bermuda caught.
 But if the raw and oozy heav'n offend
 Correct the soil, and dry the sources up
 Of wat'ry exhalation; wide and deep
 Conduct your trenches thro' the quaking bog; 200
 Solicitous with all your winding arts,
 Betray th' unwilling lake into the stream,
 And weed the forest, and invoke the winds
 To break the toils where strangled vapours lie,
 Or thro' the thickets send the crackling flames: 205
 Meantime at home with cheerful fires dispel
 The humid Air, and let your table smoke
 With solid roast or bak'd, or what the herds
 Of tamer breed supply, or what the wilds
 Yield to the toilsome pleasures of the chase: 210
 Gen'rous your wine, the boast of rip'ning years,
 But frugal be your cups: the languid frame,
 Vapid and sunk from yesterday's debauch,
 Shrinks from the cold embrace of wat'ry heav'ns.
 But neither these nor all Apollo's arts 215
 Disarm the dangers of the dropping sky,
 Unless with exercise and manly toil
 You brace your nerves, and spur the lagging blood.
 The fatt'ning clime let all the sons of Ease
 Avoid. If Indolence would wish to live, 220
 Go yawn and loiter out the long slow year
 In fairer skies. If drougthy regions parch
 The skin and lungs, and bake the thick'ning blood,
 Deep in the waving forest chuse your seat,
 Where fuming trees refresh the thirsty Air, 225
 And wake the fountains from their secret beds,
 And into lakes dilate the rapid stream
 Here spread your gardens wide, and let the cool,
 The moist relaxing vegetable store
 Prevail in each repast; your food supply'd 230

By bleeding life be gently wasted down
 By soft decoction, and a mellowing heat
 To liquid balm; or if the solid mass
 You chuse, tormented in the boiling wave,
 That thro' the thirsty channels of the blood 235
 A smooth diluted chyle may ever flow,
 The fragrant dairy from its cool recess
 Its nectar acid or benign will pour
 To drown your thirst, or let the mantling bowl
 Of keen sherbet the fickle taste relieve; 240
 For with the viscous blood the simple stream
 Will hardly mingle, and fermented cups
 Oft dissipate more moisture than they give.
 Yet when pale seasons rise, or Winter rolls
 His horrors o'er the world, thou may'st indulge 245
 In feasts more genial, and impatient broach
 The mellow cask: then too the scourging Air
 Provokes to keener toils than sultry droughts
 Allow; but rarely we such skies blaspheme:
 Steep'd in continual rains, or with raw fogs 250
 Bedew'd, our seasons droop; incumbent still
 A pond'rous heav'n o'erwhelms the sinking soul:
 Lab'ring with storms in heapy mountains rise
 Th' embattled clouds, as if the Stygian shades
 Had left the dungeon of eternal Night, 255
 Till black with thunder all the south descends.
 Scarce in a show'rless day the heav'ns indulge
 Our melting clime, except the baleful east
 Withers the tender spring, and sourly checks
 The fancy of the year. Our fathers talk'd 260
 Of summers, balmy airs, and skies serene:
 Good Heav'n! for what unexpiated crimes
 This dismal change! The brooding elements
 Do they, your pow'rful ministers of wrath,
 Prepare some fierce exterminating plague? 265
 Or is it fix'd in the decrees above
 That lofty Albion melt into the main?
 Indulgent Nature! O dissolve this gloom!
 Bind in eternal adamant the winds
 That drown or wither, give the genial west 270

To breathe, and in its turn the sprightly north,
 And may once more the circling seasons rule
 The year, not mix in ev'ry monstrous day!

Meantime the moist malignity to shun
 Of burden'd skies, mark where the dry champaign 275
 Swells into cheerful hills, where marjoram
 And thyme, the love of bees, perfume the Air,
 And where the cynorrhodon * with the rose
 For fragrance vies, for in the thirsty soil
 Most fragrant breathe the aromatic tribes : 280
 There bid thy roofs high on the basking steep
 Ascend, there light thy hospitable fires,
 And let them see the winter morn arise,
 The summer ev'ning blushing in the west,
 While with umbrageous oaks the ridge behind 285
 O'erhung defends you from the blust'ring north,
 And bleak affliction of the peevish east.
 O when the growling winds contend, and all
 The sounding forest fluctuates in the storm,
 To sink in warm repose, and hear the din 290
 Howl o'er the steady battlements delights
 Above the luxury of vulgar sleep!
 The murm'ring rivulet, and the hoarser strain
 Of waters rushing o'er the slipp'ry rocks
 Will nightly lull you to ambrosial rest. 295
 To please the fancy is no trifling good
 Where Health is study'd; for whatever moves
 The mind with calm delight promotes the just
 And nat'ral movements of th' harmonious frame.
 Besides, the sportive brook for ever shakes 300
 The trembling Air that floats from hill to hill,
 From vale to mountain, with incessant change
 Of purest element, refreshing still
 Your airy seat, and uninfected gods.
 Chiefly for this I praise the man who builds 305
 High on the breezy ridge, whose lofty sides
 Th' ethereal deep with endless billows chafes;
 His purer mansion nor contagious years
 Shall reach nor deadly putrid airs annoy.

* The wild rose, or that which grows on the common brier.

But may no fogs from lake or fenny plain
 Involve my hill! and wherefoe'er you build,
 Whether on sun-burnt Epsom, or the plains
 Wash'd by the silent Lee, in Chelsea low,
 Or high Blackheath, with wintry winds assail'd,
 Dry be your house, but airy more than warm, 315
 Else ev'ry breath of ruder wind will strike
 Your tender body thro' with rapid pains,
 Fierce coughs will tease you, hoarseness bind your voice,
 Or moist gravedo load your aching brows.
 These to defy, and all the fates that dwell 320
 In cloister'd Air tainted with steaming life,
 Let lofty ceilings grace your ample rooms,
 And still at azure noontide may your dome
 At ev'ry window drink the liquid sky.

Need we the sunny situation here, 325
 And theatres open to the south commend,
 Here where the Morning's misty breath infects
 More than the torrid noon? How sickly grow,
 How pale, the plants in those ill-fated vales
 That circled round with the gigantic heap 330
 Of mountains never felt, nor ever hope
 To feel, the genial vigour of the sun!
 While on the neighb'ring hill the rose inflames
 The verdant spring, in virgin beauty blows
 The tender lily languishingly sweet, 33
 O'er ev'ry hedge the wanton woodbine roves,
 And autumn ripens in the summer's ray.
 Nor less the warmer living tribes demand
 The fost'ring sun, whose energy divine
 Dwells not in mortal fire, whose gen'rous heat 340
 Glows thro' the mass of grosser elements,
 And kindles into life the pond'rous spheres:
 Cheer'd by thy kind invigorating warmth
 We court thy beams great Majesty of Day!
 If not the soul the regent of this world,
 First-born of Heav'n, and only less than God! 346

THE
ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.

BOOK II, DIET.

ENOUGH of Air ; a desert subject now,
 Rougher and wilder, rises to my sight ;
 A barren waste, where not a garland grows
 To bind the Muse's brow, not ev'n a proud
 Stupendous solitude frowns o'er the heath, 5
 To rouse a noble horror in the soul,
 But rugged paths fatigue, and Error leads
 Thro' endless labyrinths the devious feet.
 Farewell ethereal Fields ! the humbler arts
 Of life, the Table and the homely Gods, 10
 Demand my song : Elysian Gales adieu !
 The blood, the fountain whence the spirits flow,
 The gen'rous stream that waters ev'ry part,
 And motion, vigour, and warm life, conveys
 To ev'ry particle that moves or lives, 15
 This vital fluid, thro' unnumber'd tubes
 Pour'd by the heart, and to the heart again
 Refunded, scourg'd for ever round and round,
 Enrag'd with heat and toil, at last forgets
 Its balmy nature ; virulent and thin 20
 It grows, and now but that a thousand gates
 Are open to its flight it would destroy
 The parts it cherish'd and repair'd before.
 Besides, the flexible and tender tubes
 Melt in the mildest most nectareous tide 25
 That rip'ning Nature rolls, as in the stream
 Its crumbling banks ; but what the vital force
 Of plastic fluids hourly batters down
 That very force whole plastic particles
 Rebuild : so mutable the state of man ! 30
 For this the watchful appetite was giv'n,
 Daily with fresh materials to repair
 This unavoidable expense of life,
 This necessary waste of flesh and blood :
 Hence the concoctive pow'rs with various art 35

Subdue the cruder aliments to chyle,
 The chyle to blood, the foamy purple tide
 To liquors, which thro' finer arteries
 To different parts their winding course pursue,
 To try new changes and new form put on 40
 Or for the public or some private use.

Nothing so-foreign but th' athletic hind
 Can labour into blood. The hungry meal
 Alone he fears, or aliments too thin,
 By violent pow'rs too easily subdu'd 45
 Too soon expell'd. His daily labour thaws
 To friendly chyle the most rebellious mass
 That salt can harden, or the smoke of years ;
 Nor does his gorge the luscious bacon rue,
 Nor that which Cestria sends, tenacious paste 50
 Of solid milk. But ye of softer clay,
 Infirm and delicate, and ye who waste
 With pale and bloated sloth the tedious day,
 Avoid the stubborn aliment, avoid
 The full repast, and let sagacious Age 55
 Grow wiser, lesson'd by the dropping teeth.

Half subtiliz'd to chyle the liquid food
 Readiest obeys th' assimilating pow'rs,
 And soon the tender vegetable mass
 Relents, and soon the young of those that tread 60
 The steadfast earth, or cleave the green abyss,
 Or pathless sky. And if the steen must fall,
 In youth and sanguine vigour let him die,
 Nor stay till rigid age or heavy ails
 Absolve him ill-requited from the yoke. 65
 Some with high forage and luxuriant ease
 Indulge the vet'ran ox ; but wiser thou
 From the bald mountain, or the barren downs,
 Expect the flocks by frugal Nature fed,
 A race of purer blood, with exercise
 Refin'd and scanty fare ; for, old or young,
 The stall'd are never healthy, nor the cramm'd.
 Not all the culinary arts can tame
 To wholesome food th' abominable growth
 Of rest and gluttony ; the prudent taste 75

Rejects like bane such loathsome lusciousness;
 The languid stomach curses e'en the pure
 Delicious fat, and all the race of oil,
 For more the oily aliments relax
 Its feeble tone, and with the eager lymph 80
 (Fond to incorporate with all it meets)
 Coyly they mix, and shun with slipp'ry wiles
 The woo'd embrace. Th' irresoluble oil,
 So gentle late and blandishing, in floods
 Of rancid bile o'erflows: what tumults hence 85
 What horrors rise were nauseous to relate.
 Chuse leaner viands, ye whose jovial make
 Too fast the gummy nutriment imbibes,
 Chuse sober meals, and rouse to active life
 Your cumbrous clay, nor on th' enfeebling down 90
 Irresolute protract the morning hours:
 But let the man whose bones are thinly clad
 With cheerful ease and succulent repast
 Improve his habit if he can; for each
 Extreme departs from perfect sanity. 95
 I could relate what table this demands
 Or that complexion, what the various pow'rs
 Of various foods; but fifty years would roll
 And fifty more before the tale were done.
 Besides, there often lurks some nameless, strange, 100
 Peculiar thing, nor on the skin display'd,
 Felt in the pulse, nor in the habit seen,
 Which finds a poison in the food that most
 The temp'ature affects. There are whose blood
 Impetuous rages thro' the turgid veins 105
 Who better bear the fiery fruits of Ind
 Than the moist melon or pale cucumber:
 Of chilly nature others fly the board
 Supply'd with slaughter, and the vernal pow'rs
 For cooler kinder sustenance implore: 110
 Some ev'n the gen'rous nutriment detest
 Which in the shell the sleeping embryo rears:
 Some, more unhappy still, repent the gifts
 Of Pales, soft, delicious, and benign,
 The balmy quintessence of ev'ry flow'r, 115

And ev'ry grateful herb that decks the spring,
 The soft'ring dew of tender sprouting life,
 The best refection of declining age
 The kind restorative of those who lie
 Half dead and panting, from the doubtful strife 120
 Of nature struggling in the grasp of death.
 Try all the bounties of this fertile globe
 There is not such a salutary food
 As suits with ev'ry stomach ; but (except
 Amid the mingled mass of fish and fowl, 125
 And boil'd and bak'd you hesitate, by which
 You sunk oppress'd, or whether not by all)
 Taught by experience soon you may discern
 What pleases, what offends. Avoid the cates
 That lull the sicken'd appetite too long, 130
 Or heave with sev'rish flushings all the face,
 Burn in the palms, and parch the rough'ning tongue,
 Or much diminish or too much increase
 Th' expense which Nature's wise economy
 Without or waste or avarice maintains. 135
 Such cates abjur'd let prowling Hunger loose,
 And bid the curious palate roam at will ;
 They scarce can err amid the various stores
 That burst the teeming entrails of the world.
 Led by sagacious taste the ruthless king 140
 Of beasts on blood and slaughter only lives ;
 The tiger, form'd alike to cruel meals,
 Would at the manger starve ; of milder seeds
 The gen'rous horse to herbage and to grain
 Confines his wish, tho' fabling Greece resound 145
 The Thracian steeds with human carnage wild.
 Prompted by instinct's never-erring pow'r
 Each creature knows its proper aliment ;
 But man, th' inhabitant of ev'ry clime,
 With all the commoners of Nature feeds. 150
 Directed, bounded, by his pow'r within
 Their cravings are well-aim'd. Voluptuous man
 Is by superior faculties misled,
 Misled from pleasure e'en in quest of joy.
 Sated with Nature's boons, what thousands seek, 155

With dishes tortur'd from their native taste
 And mad variety, to spur beyond
 Its wiser will the jaded appetite!
 Is this for pleasure? learn a juster taste,
 And know that temp'rance is true luxury: 160
 Or is it pride? pursue some nobler aim;
 Dismiss your parasites who praise for hire,
 And earn the fair esteem of honest men,
 Whose praise is fame. Form'd of such clay as your's
 The sick, the needy, shiver at your gates; 165
 E'en modest Want may bless your hand unseen,
 Tho' hush'd in patient wretchedness at home.
 Is there no virgin grac'd with ev'ry charm
 But that which binds the mercenary vow?
 No youth of genius, whose neglected bloom 170
 Unfoster'd, sickens in the barren shade?
 Nor worthy man by Fortune's random blows,
 Or by a heart too gen'rous and humane,
 Constrain'd to leave his happy natal seat,
 And sigh for wants more bitter than his own? 175
 There are, while human miseries abound,
 A thousand ways to waste superfluous wealth,
 Without one fool or flatt'rer at your board,
 Without one hour of sickness or disgust.
 But other ills th' ambiguous feast pursue, 180
 Besides provoking the lascivious taste.
 Such various foods, tho' harmless each alone,
 Each other violate, and oft' we see,
 What strife is brew'd, and what pernicious bane
 From combinations of innoxious things. 185
 Th' unbounded taste I mean not to confine
 To hermit's Diet, needlessly severe:
 But would you long the sweets of Health enjoy,
 Or husband pleasure, at one impious meal
 Exhaust not half the bounties of the year 190
 Of ev'ry realm. It matters not mean while
 How much to-morrow differ from to-day;
 So far indulge: it is fit besides that man,
 To change obnoxious, be to change inur'd:
 But stay the curious appetite, and taste

With caution fruits you never try'd before :
 For want of use the kindest aliment
 Sometimes offends, while custom tames the rage
 Of poison to mild amity with life.

So Heav'n has form'd us to the gen'ral taste 200

Of all its gifts, so custom has improv'd
 This bent of Nature, that few simple foods
 Of all that earth, or air, or ocean yield,
 But by excess offend. Beyond the sense
 Of light refection at the genial board 205

Indulge not often, nor protract the feast
 To dull satiety, till soft and slow
 A drowsy death creeps on th' expansive soul,
 Oppress'd and smother'd the celestial fire.
 The stomach urg'd beyond its active tone 210

Hardly to nutrimental chyle subdues
 The softest food ; unfinish'd and deprav'd,
 The chyle in all its future wand'rings owns
 Its turbid fountain, nor by purer streams
 So to be clear'd but foulness will remain. 215

To sparkling wine what ferment can exalt
 Th' unripen'd grape ? or what mechanic skill
 From the crude ore can spin the ductile gold ?

Gross riot treasures up a wealthy fund
 Of plagues, but more immedicable-ills 220

Attend the lean extreme ; for physic knows
 How to disburden the too tumid veins,
 E'en how to ripen the half-labour'd blood ?

But to unlock the elemental tubes
 Collaps'd and shrunk with long inanity, 225

And with balsamic nutriment repair
 The dry'd and worn-out habit, were to bid
 Old age grow green, and wear a second spring,
 Or the tall ash long ravish'd from the soil
 Thro' whither'd veins imbibe the vernal dew. 230

When hunger calls obey, nor often wait
 Till hunger sharpen to corrosive pain ;
 For the keen appetite will feast beyond
 What nature well can bear, and one extreme
 Ne'er without danger meets its own reverse. 235

Too greedily th' exhausted veins absorb
The recent chyle, and load enfeebled pow'rs
Oft' to th' extinction of the vital flame.
To the pale cities by the firm-set siege
And famine humbled may this verse be borne ; 240
And hear ye hardiest Sons that Albion breeds,
Long tofs'd and famish'd on the wat'y main!
The war shook off, or hospitable shore
Attain'd, with temp'rance bear the shock of joy,
Nor crown with festive rites th' auspicious day ; 245
Such feast might prove more fatal than the waves,
Than war or famine. While the vital fire
Burns feebly, heap not the green fuel on,
But prudently foment the wand'ring spark
With what the soonest feeds its kindred touch : 250
Be frugal e'en of that ; a little give
At first, that kindled add a little more,
Till by delib'rate nourishing the flame
Reviv'd with all its wonted vigour glows.
But tho' the two (the full and the jejune) 255
Extremes have each their vice, it much avails
Ever with gentle tide to ebb and flow
From this to that ; so nature learns to bear
Whatever chance or headlong appetite
May bring. Besides, a meagre day subdues 260
The cruder clods by sloth or luxury
Collected, and unloads the wheels of life.
Sometimes a coy aversion to the feast
Comes on while yet no blacker omen lowers ;
Then is a time to shun the tempting board, 265
Were it your natal or your nuptial day :
Perhaps a fast so seasonable starves
The latent seeds of woe, which rooted once
Might cost you labour : but the day return'd
Of festal luxury, the wise indulge 270
Most in the tender vegetable breed ;
Then chiefly when the summer beams inflame
The brazen heav'ns, or angry Sirius sheds
A fev'rish taint thro' the still gulf of air ;
The moist cool viands then, and flowing cup 275

From the fresh dairy-virgin's lib'ral hand,
 Will save your head from harm tho' round the world
 The dreaded caufos* roll his wasteful fires.
 Pale humid Winter loves the gen'rous board,
 The meal more copious, and a warmer fare. 280
 And longs with old wood and old wine to cheer
 His quaking heart. The seasons which divide
 Th' empires of heat and cold, by neither claim'd,
 Influenc'd by both, a middle regimen
 Impose. Thro' autumn's languishing domain 285
 Descending Nature by degrees invites
 To glowing luxury: but from the depth
 Of winter, when th' invigorated year
 Emerges, when Favonius, flush'd with love,
 Toyful and young, in ev'ry breeze descends 290
 More warm and wanton on his kindling bride,
 Then Shepherds ! then begin to spare your flocks,
 And learn with wise humanity to check
 The lust of blood. Now pregnant earth commits
 A various offspring to th' indulgent sky, 295
 Now bounteous Nature feeds with lavish hand
 The prone creation, yields what once suffic'd
 'Their dainty sovereign when the world was young,
 Ere yet the barb'rous thirst of blood had seized
 The human breast.—Each rolling month matures
 The food that suits it most; so does each clime. 301
 Far in the horrid realms of Winter, where
 Th' establish'd ocean heaps a monstrous waste
 Of shining rocks and mountains to the pole,
 There lives a hardy race, whose plainest wants 305
 Relentless earth, their cruel step-mother,
 Regards not. On the waste of iron fields
 Untam'd, intractable, no harvests wave;
 Pomona hates them, and the clownish god
 Who tends the garden. In this frozen world 310
 Such cooling gifts were vain; a fitter meal
 Is earn'd with ease, for here the fruitful spawn
 Of ocean swarms, and heaps their genial board
 With gen'rous fare and luxury profuse. 315

* The burning fever.

These are their bread, the only bread they know,
 These and their willing slave the deer, that crops
 The shrubby herbage on their meagre hills.
 Girt by the burning zone not thus the South
 Her swarthy sons in either Ind maintains,
 Or thirsty Libya, from whose fervid loins 320
 The lion bursts, and ev'ry fiend that roams
 Th' affrighted wilderness. The mountain herd
 Adult and dry no sweet repast affords,
 Nor does the tepid main such kinds produce,
 So perfect, so delicious, as the shoals 325
 Of icy Zembla. Rashly where the blood
 Brews fev'rish frays, where scarce the tubes sustain
 Its tumid fervour and tempestuous course,
 Kind Nature tempts not to such gifts as these :
 But here in livid ripeness melts the grape, 330
 Here finish'd by invigorating suns,
 Thro' the green shade the golden orange glows,
 Spontaneous ; here the turgid melon yields
 A gen'rous pulp, the coco swells on high
 With milky riches, and in horrid mail 335
 The crisp anana wraps its poignant sweets,
 Earth's vaunted progeny ! in ruder air
 Too coy to flourish, ev'n too proud to live,
 Or hardly rais'd by artificial fire
 To vapid life : here with a mother's smile 340
 Glad Amalthea pours her copious horn ;
 Here buxom Ceres reigns ; th' autumnal sea
 In boundless billows fluctuates o'er their plains :
 What suits the climate best, what suits the men,
 Nature profuses most, and most the taste 345
 Demands. The fountain edg'd with racy wine
 Or acid fruit bedews their thirsty souls ;
 The breeze eternal breathing round their limbs
 Supports in else intolerable air,
 While the cool palm, the plantain, and the grove 350
 That waves on gloomy Lebanon, assuage
 The torrid hell that beams upon their heads.

Now come ye Naiads ! to the fountains lead ;
 Now let me wander thro' your gelid reign ;

ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.

31

I burn to view th' enthusiastic wilds
 By mortal elfe untrod. I hear the din
 Of waters thund'ring o'er the ruin'd cliffs;
 With holy rev'rence I approach the rocks
 Whence glide the streams renown'd in ancient song.
 Here from the desert down the rumbling steep 360
 First springs the Nile, here bursts the sounding Po
 In angry waves, Euphrates hence devolves
 A mighty flood to water half the east,
 And there in Gothic solitude reclin'd
 The cheerless Tanais pours his hoary urn. 365
 What solemn twilight! what stupendous shades
 Inwrap these infant floods! thro' ev'ry nerve
 A sacred horror thrills, a pleasing fear
 Glides o'er my frame. The forest deepens round,
 And more gigantic still th' impending trees 370
 Stretch their extravagant arms athwart the gloom!
 Are these the confines of some Fairy world,
 A land of Genii? Say beyond these wilds
 What unknown nations? if indeed beyond
 Aught habitable lies; and whither leads, 375
 To what strange regions, or of bliss or pain,
 That subterraneous way? Propitious Maids!
 Conduct me while with fearful steps I tread
 This trembling ground. The task remains to sing
 Your gifts, (to Pæon, to the Pow'rs of Health, 380
 Command) to praise your crystal element,
 The chief ingredient in Heav'n's various works,
 Whose flexile genius sparkles in the gem,
 Grows firm in oak, and fugitive in wine,
 The vehicle, the source of nutriment, 385
 And life to all that vegetate or live.

O comfortable Streams! with eager lips,
 And trembling hand the languid thirsty quaff
 New life in you; fresh vigour fills their veins.
 No warmer cups the rural ages knew, 390
 None warmer sought the fires of humankind:
 Happy in temp'rate peace their equal days
 Felt not th' alternate fits of sev'rish mirth
 And sick dejection: still serene and pleas'd

They knew no pains but what the tender soul
 With pleasure yields to, and would ne'er forget: 395
 Blest with divine immunity from ails
 Long centuries they liv'd; their only fate
 Was ripe old age, and rather sleep than death.
 Oh! could those worthies from the world of gods
 Return to visit their degen'rate sons, 401
 How would they scorn the joys of modern time,
 With all our art and toil improv'd to pain!
 Too happy they! but wealth brought luxury,
 And luxury on sloth begot disease. 405

Learn temp'rance Friends! and hear without disdain
 The choice of water. Thus the Coan sage *
 Opin'd, and thus the learn'd of ev'ry school:
 What least of foreign principles partakes
 Is best; the lightest then what bears the touch 410
 Of fire the least, and soonest mounts in air;
 The most insipid, the most void of smell.
 Such the rude mountains from his horrid sides
 Pours down, such waters in the sandy vale
 For ever boil, alike of winter frosts, 415
 And summer's heat secure. The crystal stream
 Thro' rocks resounding, or for many a mile
 O'er the chaf'd pebbles hurl'd, yields wholesome, pure,
 And mellow draughts, except when winter thaws,
 And half the mountains melt into the tide. 420
 Tho' thirst were e'er so resolute avoid
 The sordid lake, and all such drowsy floods
 As fill from Lethe Belgia's slow canals,
 (With rest corrupt, with vegetation green,
 Squalid with generation and the birth 425
 Of little monsters) till the pow'r of fire
 Has from profane embraces disengag'd
 The violated lymph. The virgin stream
 In boiling wastes its finer soul in air.

Nothing like simple element dilutes 430
 The food, or gives the chyle so soon to flow:
 But where the stomach, indolent and cold,
 Toys with its duty, animate with wine

* Hippocrates.

ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.

33

Th' insipid stream, tho' golden Ceres yields
 A more voluptuous, a more sprightly draught,
 Perhaps more active: wine unmix'd, and all
 The gluy floods that from the vex'd abyss
 Of fermentation spring, with spirit fraught,
 And furious with intoxicating fire,
 Retard concoction, and preserve unthaw'd
 Th' embody'd mass. You see what countless years,
 Embalm'd in fiery quintessence of wine,
 The puny wonders of the reptile world,
 The tender rudiments of life, the slim
 Unravellings of minute anatomy,
 Maintain their texture and unchang'd remain.

440

445

We curse not wine; the vile excess we blame,
 More fruitful than th' accumulated board
 Of pain and misery; for the subtle draught
 Faster and surer swells the vital tide,
 And with more active poison than the floods
 Of grosser crudity convey pervades
 The far remote meanders of our frame.
 Ah! fly Deceiver! branded o'er and o'er,
 Yet still believ'd! exulting o'er the wreck
 Of sober vows!—But the Parnassian Maids
 Another time perhaps shall sing the joys,
 The fatal charms, the many woes, of wine,
 Perhaps its various tribes and various pow'rs.*

450

455

Meantime I would not always dread the bowl,
 Nor ev'ry trespass shun. The fev'rish strife
 Rous'd by the rare debauch subdued, expels,
 The loit'ring crudities that burden life,
 And like a torrent full and rapid clears
 Th' obstructed tubes. Besides, this restless world
 Is full of chances, which by habit's pow'r
 To learn to bear is easier than to shun.
 Ah! when ambition, meagre love of gold,
 Or sacred country, calls with mellowing wine
 To moisten well the thirsty suffrages,
 Say how, unseason'd to the midnight frays
 Of Comus and his rout, wilt thou contend

461

465

470

With Centaurs long to hardy deeds inur'd?
 Then learn to revel, but by slow degrees;
 By slow degrees the liberal arts are won, 475
 And Hercules grew strong. But when you smooth
 The brows of Care indulge your festive vein
 In cups by well-inform'd experience found
 The least your bane, and only with your friends:
 There are sweet follies, frailties, to be seen 480
 By friends alone, and men of gen'rous minds.

Oh seldom may the fated hours return
 Of drinking deep! I would not daily taste,
 Except when life declines, ev'n sober cups.
 Weak with'ring Age no rigid law forbids 485
 With frugal nectar smooth and slow, with balm,
 The sapless habit daily to bedew,
 And give the hesitating wheels of life
 Gliblier to play: but youth has better joys;
 And is it wise when youth with pleasure flows 490
 To squander the reliefs of age and pain?

What dex'trous thousands just within the goal
 Of wild debauch direct their nightly course!
 Perhaps no sickly qualms bedim their days,
 No morning admonitions shock the head; 495
 But ah what woes remain! life rolls apace,
 And that incurable disease old age,
 In youthful bodies more severely felt,
 More sternly active, shakes their blasted prime,
 Except kind Nature by some hasty blow 500
 Prevent the ling'ring Fates: for know whate'er
 Beyond its natural fervour hurries on
 The sanguine tide, whether the frequent bowl,
 High-season'd fare, or exercise to toil
 Protracted, spurs to its last stage tir'd life, 505
 And sows the temples with untimely snow.
 When life is new the ductile fibres feel
 The heart's increasing force, and day by day
 The growth advances, till the larger tubes
 Acquiring (from their * elemental veins 510

* In the human body as well as in those of other animals the larger blood vessels are composed of smaller ones, which by the violent motion and pressure

75

80

85

90

95

500

505

510

blood
effluve



Condens'd to solid chords) a firmer tone,
 Sustain, and just sustain, th' impetuous blood :
 Here stops the growth. With overbearing pulse
 And pressure still the great destroy the small,
 Still with the ruins of the small grow strong : 515
 Life glows meantime amid the grinding force
 Of viscous fluids and elastic tubes ;
 Its various functions vig'rous are ply'd
 By strong machin'ry, and in solid Health
 The man confirm'd long triumphs o'er disease. 520
 But the full ocean ebbs : there is a point
 By Nature fix'd whence life must downward tend ;
 For still the beating tide consolidates
 The stubborn vessels, more reluctant still
 To the weak throbs of th' ill-supported heart : 525
 This languishing, these strength'ning, by degrees
 To hard unyielding, unelastic bone ;
 Thro' tedious channels the congealing flood
 Crawls lazily, and hardly wanders on ;
 It loiters still, and now it stirs no more. 530
 This is the period few attain, the death
 Of Nature. Thus (to Heav'n ordain'd it) life
 Destroys itself ; and could these laws have chang'd
 Nestor might now the fates of Troy relate,
 And Homer live immortal as his song. 535
 What does not fade ? The tow'r that long had stood
 The crash of thunder, and the warring winds
 Shook by the slow but sure destroyer Time,
 Now hangs in doubtful ruins o'er its base,
 And flinty pyramids, and walls of brass 540
 Descend. The Babylonian spires are sunk ;
 Achaia, Rome, and Egypt, moulder down.
 Time shakes the stable tyranny of thrones,
 And tott'ring empires rush by their own weight.
 This huge rotundity we tread grows old, 545

of the fluids in the large vessels lose their cavities by degrees, and degenerate into impervious chords of fibres. In proportion as these small vessels become solid the larger must of course grow less extensive, more rigid, and make a stronger resistance to the action of the heart and force of the blood. From this gradual condensation of the smaller vessels, and consequent rigidity of the larger ones, the progress of the human body from infancy to old age is accounted for.



"Hine theee thee thee. To theee of theee.
 and to theee theee thee by theee theee thee.
 vide page 33, line 343.

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Condens'd to solid chords) a firmer tone,
Sustain, and just sustain, th' impetuous blood :
Here stops the growth. With overbearing pulse
And pressure still the great destroy the small,
Still with the ruins of the small grow strong : 515
Life glows meantime amid the grinding force
Of viscous fluids and elastic tubes ;

Its various functions vigorous are ply'd
By strong machin'ry, and in solid Health
The man confirm'd long triumphs o'er disease. 520

But the full ocean ebbs : there is a point
By Nature fix'd whence life must downward tend ;
For still the beating tide consolidates

The stubborn vessels, more reluctant still
To the weak throbs of th' ill-supported heart : 525
This languishing, this strength'ning, by degrees

To hard unyielding, unelastic bone ;
Thro' tedious channels the congealing flood
Crawls lazily, and hardly wanders on ;
It loiters still, and now it flows no more. 530

This is the period few attain, the death
Of Nature. Thus (so Heav'n ordain'd it) life
Destroys itself ; and could these laws have chang'd
Nellor might now the fates of Troy relate,
And Homer live immortal as his song. 535

What does not fade ? The tow'r that long had stood
The crash of thunder, and the warring winds
Shook by the flow but sure destroyer Time,

Now hangs in doubtful ruins o'er its base,
And flinty pyramids, and walls of brass 540
Descend. The Babylonian spires are sunk ;

Achana, Rome, and Egypt, moulder down.
Time shakes the stable tyranny of thrones,
And tottering empires rush by their own weight.

This huge rotundity we tread grows old, 545

of the fluids in the large vessels lose their cavities by degrees, and degenerate into unnervous chora, or fibres. In proportion as these fluid vessels become solid the larger kind of arteries grow less extensible, more rigid, and thus afford less resistance to the action of the heart and force of the blood. From this gradual condensation of the smaller vessels, and consequent rigidity of the larger ones, the progress of the human body from infancy to old age is accounted for.

And all those worlds that roll around the sun,
 The sun himself, shall die, and ancient Night
 Again involve the desolate abyss,
 Till the great Father thro' the lifeless gloom
 Extend his arm to light another world, 550
 And bid new planets roll by other laws:
 For thro' the regions of unbounded space,
 Where unconfin'd Omnipotence has room,
 Being in various systems fluctuates still
 Between creation and abhorr'd decay; 555
 It ever did, perhaps, and ever will:
 New worlds are still emerging from the deep,
 The old descending in their turns to rise. 558

THE

ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.

BOOK III. EXERCISE.

THRO' various toils th' advent'rous Muse has past,
 But half the toil, and more than half, remains.
 Rude in her theme, and hardly fit for song,
 Plain, and of little ornament, and I
 But little practis'd in th' Aonian arts: 5
 Yet not in vain such Labours have we try'd
 If aught these Lays the fickle Health confirm.
 To you ye Delicate! I write, for you
 I tame my youth to philosophic cares.
 And grow still paler by the midnight lamps. 10
 Not to debilitate with tim'rous rules
 A hardy frame, nor needlessly to brave
 Unglorious dangers, proud of mortal strength,
 Is all the lesson that in wholesome years
 Concerns the strong. His care were ill bestow'd 15
 Who would with warm effeminacy nurse
 The thriving oak, which on the mountain's brow
 Bears all the blasts that sweep the wintry heav'n.
 Behold the lab'rer of the glebe, who toils
 In dust, in rain, in cold, and sultry skies:

ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.

37

Save but the grain from mildews and the flood,
Nought anxious he what sickly stars ascend.

He knows no laws by *Æsculapius* giv'n,

He studies none; yet him nor midnight fogs

Infest, nor those envenomed shafts that fly

25

When rapid *Sirius* fires th' autumnal noon.

His habit pure, with plain and temp'rate meals,

Robust with labour, and by custom steel'd

To ev'ry casualty of vary'd life,

Serene he bears the peevish eastern blast,

30

And uninfected breathes the mortal south.

Such the reward of rude and sober life,

Of labour such. By health the peasant's toil

Is well repaid, if exercise were pain

Indeed, and temp'rance pain. By arts like these

35

Laconia nurs'd of old her hardy sons,

And *Rome's* unconquer'd legions urg'd their way

Unhurt thro' ev'ry toil, in ev'ry clime.

Toil and be strong. By toil the flaccid nerves

Grow firm, and gain a more compacted tone;

40

The greener juices are by toil subdu'd,

Mellow'd, and subtiliz'd, the vapid old

Expell'd, and all the rancour of the blood.

Come my companions! ye who feel the charms

Of Nature and the year; come, let us stray

45

Where chance or fancy leads our roving walk;

Come while the soft voluptuous breezes fan

The fleecy heav'ns, inwrap the limbs in balm,

And shed a charming languor o'er the soul;

Nor when bright winter shows with prickly frost

50

The vig'rous ether, in unmanly warmth

Indulge at home, nor e'en when *Eurus's* blasts

This way and that convolve the lab'ring woods.

My lib'ral walks, save when the skies in rain

Or fogs relent, no season should confine

55

Or to the cloister'd gall'ry or arcade.

Go climb the mountains; from th' ethereal source

Imbibe the recent gale. The cheerful morn

Beams o'er the hills; go mount th' exulting steed:

Already see the deep-mouth'd beagles catch

60

The tainted mazes, and on eager sport
 Intent; with emulous impatience try
 Each doubtful trace: or if a nobler prey
 Delight you more, go chase the desp'rate deer,
 And thro' its deepest solitudes awake
 The vocal forest with the jovial horn.

65

But if the breathless chase o'er hill and dale
 Exceed your strength, a sport of less fatigue,
 Not less delightful, the prolific stream
 Affords. The crystal riv'let that o'er
 A stony channel rolls its rapid maze
 Swarms with the silver fry: such thro' the bounds
 Of past'ral Stafford runs the brawling Trent;
 Such Eden, sprung from Cumbrian mountain; such
 The Esk, o'erhung with woods: and such the stream
 On whose Arcadian banks I first drew air,
 Liddal, till now, except in Doric lays,
 Tun'd to her murmurs by her lovesick swains,
 Unknown in song, tho' not a purer stream
 Thro' meads more flow'ry or more romantic groves
 Rolls towards the western main. Hail sacred Flood!
 May still thy hospitable swains be blest
 In rural innocence, thy mountains still
 Teem with the fleecy race, thy tuneful woods
 For ever flourish, and thy vales look gay
 With painted meadows and the golden grain;
 Oft' with thy blooming sons, when life was new,
 Sportive and petulant, and charm'd with toys,
 In thy transparent eddies have I lav'd,
 Oft' trac'd with patient steps thy Fairy banks,
 With the well imitated fly to hook
 The eager trout, and with the slender line
 And yielding rod solicit to the shore
 The struggling panting prey, while vernal clouds
 And tepid gales obscur'd the ruffled pool,
 And from the deeps call'd forth the wanton swarms.

70

76

79

86

90

95

Form'd on the Samian school, or those of Ind
 There are who think these pastimes scarce humane:
 Yet in my mind (and not relentless I)
 His life is pure that wears no fouler stains.

100

But if thro' genuine tenderness of heart,
 Or secret want of relish for the game,
 You shun the glories of the chase, nor care
 To haunt the peopled stream, the garden yields
 A soft amusement, an humane delight, 105
 To raise th' insipid nature of the ground,
 Or tame it's savage genius to the grace
 Of careless sweet rusticity, that seems
 The amiable result of happy chance,
 Is to create, and gives a godlike joy 110
 Which ev'ry year improves. Nor thou disdain
 To check the lawless riot of the trees,
 To plant the grove, or turn the barren mould.
 O happy he, whom when his years decline
 (His fortune and his fame by worthy means 115
 Attain'd, and equal to his mod'rate mind,
 His life approv'd by all the wise and good,
 E'en envy'd by the vain) the peaceful groves
 Of Epicurus from this stormy world
 Receive to rest, of all ungrateful cares 120
 Absolv'd, and sacred from the selfish crowd!
 Happiest of men! if the same soil invites
 A chosen few, companions of his youth,
 Once fellow rakes perhaps, now rural friends,
 With whom in easy commerce to pursue 125
 Nature's free charms, and vie for sylvan fame;
 A fair ambition, void of strife or guile,
 Or jealousy or pain to be outdone;
 Who plans th' enchanted garden, who directs
 The vists best, and best conducts the stream, 130
 Whose groves the fastest thicken and ascend,
 Whom first the welcome spring salutes, who shews
 The earliest bloom, the sweetest, proudest charms
 Of Flora, who best gives Pomona's juice
 To match the sprightly genius of Champaign. 135
 Thrice happy days in rural bus'ness past!
 Blest winter nights! when as the genial fire
 Cheers the wide hall, his cordial family
 With soft domestic arts the hours beguile,
 And pleasing talk that starts no tim'rous fame, 140

With witless wantonness to hunt it down,
 Or thro' the Fairyland of tale or song
 Delighted wander, in fictitious fates
 Engag'd, and all that strikes humanity,
 Till lost in fable they the stealing hour 145
 Of timely rest forget. Sometimes at eve
 His neighbours lift the latch, and bless unbid
 His festal roof, while o'er the light repast
 And sprightly cups they mix in social joy,
 And thro' the maze of conversation trace 150
 Whate'er amuses or improves the mind.
 Sometimes at eve (for I delight to taste
 The native zest and flavour of the fruit
 Where sense grows wild and tastes of no manure)
 The decent, honest, cheerful, husbandman 155
 Should drown his labours in my friendly bowl,
 And at my table find himself at home.

Whate'er your study, in whate'er you sweat,
 Indulge your taste. Some love the manly foils,
 The tennis some, and some the graceful dance; 160
 Others more hardy range the purple heath
 Or naked stubble, where from field to field
 The sounding covies urge their lab'ring flight,
 Eager amid the rising cloud to pour
 The gun's unerring thunder; and there are 165
 Whom still the meed* of the green archer charms.
 He chuses best whose labour entertains
 His vacant fancy most: the toil you hate
 Fatigues you soon, and scarce improves your limbs.

As beauty still has blemish, and the mind 170
 The most accomplish'd its imperfect side,
 Few bodies are there of that happy mould
 But some one part is weaker than the rest;
 The legs perhaps or arms refuse their load,
 Or the chest labours: these assiduously 175
 But gently in their proper arts employ'd
 Acquire a vigour and springy activity

* This word is much used by some of our old English Poets, and signifies reward or prize.

ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.

41

To which they were not born : but weaker parts
Abhor fatigue and violent discipline.

Begin with gentle toils ; and, as your nerves
Grow firm, to hardier by just steps aspire. 180

The prudent e'en in ev'ry mod'rate walk
At first but saunter, and by slow degrees
Increase their pace. This doctrine of the wise
Well knows the master of the flying steed. 185

First from the goal the manag'd coursers play
On bended reins ; as yet the skilful youth
Represents their foamy pride ; but ev'ry breath
The race grows warmer, and the tempest swells
Till all the fiery mettle has its way 190

And the thick thunder hurries o'er the plain.
When all at once from indolence to toil
You spring, the fibres by the hasty shock
Are tir'd and crack'd before their unctuous coats
Compress'd can pour the lubricating balm. 195

Besides, collected in the passive veins
The purple mass a sudden torrent rolls,
O'erpow'rs the heart and deluges the lungs
With dang'rous inundation ; oft' the source
Of fatal woes, a cough that foams with blood, 200
Asthma, and feller peripneumony*,
Or the slow minings of the hectic fire.

Th' athletic fool, to whom what Heav'n deny'd
Of soul is well compensated in limbs,
Oft' from his rage or brainless frolic feels 205
His vegetation and brute force decay.

The men of better clay and finer mould
Know nature, feel the human dignity,
And scorn to vie with oxen or with apes.
Pursu'd prolixly e'en the gentlest toil 210

Is waste of Health : repose by small fatigue
Is earn'd, and (where your habit is not prone
To thaw) by the first moisture of the brows.
The fine and subtille spirits cost too much
To be profus'd, too much the roscid balm : 215
But when the hard varieties of life

* The inflammation of the lungs.

You toil to learn, or try the dusty chase,
 Or the warm deeds of some important day,
 Hot from the field indulge not yet your limbs
 In wish'd repose, nor court the fanning gale 220
 Or taste the spring. O by the sacred tears
 Of widows, orphans, mothers, sisters, fires,
 Forbear! no other pestilence has driv'n
 Such myriads o'er th' irremeable deep.
 Why this so fatal the sagacious Muse 225
 Thro' Nature's cunning labyrinths could trace;
 But there are secrets, which who knows not now
 Must, ere he reach them, climb the heapy Alps
 Of Science, and devote sev'n years to toil.
 Besides, I would not stun your patient ears 230
 With what it little boots you to attain.
 He knows enough the mariner, who knows
 Where lurk the shelves, and where the whirlpools boil,
 What signs portend the storm: to subtler minds
 He leaves to scan from what mysterious cause 235
 Charybdis rages in th' Ionian wave,
 Whence those impetuous currents in the main
 Which neither oar nor sail can stem, and why
 The rough'ning deep expects the storm as sure
 As red Orion mounts the shrouded heav'n. 240
 In ancient times, when Rome with Athens vy'd
 For polish'd luxury and useful arts,
 All hot and reeking from th' Olympic strife
 And warm Palestira, in the tepid bath
 Th' athletic youth relax'd their weary limbs; 245
 Soft oils bedew'd them, with the grateful pow'rs
 Of nard and cassia fraught, to sooth and heal
 The cherish'd nerves. Our less voluptuous clime
 Not much invites us to such arts as these.
 'Tis not for those whom gelid skies embrace 250
 And chilling fogs, whose perspiration feels
 Such frequent bars from Eurys and the north,
 'Tis not for those to cultivate a skin
 Too soft, or teach the recremental fume
 Too fast to crowd thro' such precarious ways; 255
 For thro' the small arterial mouths that pierce

In endless millions the close-woven skin
The baser fluids in a constant stream
Escape, and viewless melt into the winds :
While this eternal this most copious waste 260
Of blood, degenerate into vapid brine,
Maintains its wonted measure all the pow'rs
Of health befriended you, all the wheels of life
With ease and pleasure move ; but this restrain'd
Or more or less, so more or less you feel 265
The functions labour : from this fatal source
What woes descend is never to be sung ;
To take their numbers were to count the sands
That ride in whirlwind the parch'd Libyan air,
Or waves that when the blust'ring north embroils 270
The Baltic thunder on the German shore.
Subject not then by soft emollient arts
This grand expense on which your fates depend
To ev'ry caprice of the sky, nor thwart
The genius of your clime ; for from the blood 275
Least fickle rise the recremental streams,
And least obnoxious to the styptic air,
Which breathe thro' straiter and more callous pores :
The temper'd Scythian hence half-naked treads
His boundless snows, nor rues th' inclement heav'n,
And hence our painted ancestors defy'd 281
The east, nor curs'd like us their fickle sky.
The body moulded by the clime endures
Th' equator heats or Hyperborean frost,
Except by habits foreign to its turn 285
Unwise you counteract its forming pow'r.
Rude at the first, the winter shocks you less
By long acquaintance : study then your sky,
Form to its manners your obsequious frame,
And learn to suffer what you cannot shun. 290
Against the rigours of a damp cold heav'n
To fortify their bodies some frequent
The gelid cistern, and where nought forbids
I praise their dauntless heart : a frame so steel'd
Dread not the cough, nor those ungenial blasts 295
That breathe the tertian or fell rheumatism ;

The nerves so temper'd never quit their tone ;
 No chronic languors haunt such hardy breasts :
 But all things have their bounds ; and he who makes
 By daily use the kindest regimen 300
 Essential to his health, should never mix
 With humankind, nor art nor trade pursue :
 He not the safe vicissitudes of life
 Without some shock endures ; ill-fitted he
 To want the known or bear unusual things. 305
 Besides, the pow'rful remedies of pain
 (Since pain in spite of all our care will come)
 Should never with your prosp'rous days of Health
 Grow too familiar ; for by frequent use
 The strongest medicines lose their healing pow'r, 310
 And e'en the surest poisons theirs to kill.

Let those who from the frozen Arctos reach
 Parch'd Mauritania or the sultry west,
 Or the wide flood that laves rich Indostan,
 Plunge thrice a day, and in the tepid wave 315
 Untwist their stubborn pores, that full and free
 Th' evaporation thro' the soften'd skin
 May bear proportion to the swelling blood ;
 So may they 'scape the fever's rapid flames,
 So feel untainted the hot breath of hell. 320
 With us the man of no complaint demands
 The warm ablution just enough to clear
 The sluices of the skin, enough to keep
 The body sacred from indecent soil.
 Still to be pure, e'en did it not conduce 325
 (As much it does) to Health, were greatly worth
 Your daily pains : it is this adorns the rich ;
 The want of this is poverty's worst woe ;
 With this external virtue age maintains
 A decent grace ; without it youth and charms 330
 Are loathsome : this the venal Graces know,
 So doubtless do your wives ; for marry'd fires
 As well as lovers still pretend to taste :
 Nor is it less (all prudent wives can tell)
 To lose a husband's than a lover's heart. 335

ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.

45

But now the hours and seasons when to toil
From foreign themes recall my wand'ring song.
Some labour fasting, or but slightly fed,
To lull the grinding stomach's hungry rage.
Where nature feeds too corpulent a frame 340
'Tis wisely done; for while the thirsty veins,
Impatient of lean penury, devour
The treasur'd oil, then is the happiest time
To shake the lazy balsam from its cells.
Now while the stomach from the full repast 345
Subsides, but ere returning hunger gnaws,
Ye leaner habits! give an hour to toil,
And ye whom no luxuriancy of growth
Oppresses yet or threatens to oppress:
But from the recent meal no labours please 350
Of limbs or mind; for now the cordial pow'rs
Claim all the wand'ring spirits to a work
Of strong and subtle toil and great event,
A work of time; and you may rue the day
You hurry'd with untimely exercise 355
A half concocted chyle into the blood.
The body overcharg'd with unctuous phlegm
Much toil demands, the lean elastic less.
While winter chills the blood and binds the veins
No labours are too hard: by those you 'scape 360
The slow diseases of the torpid year,
Endless to name, to one of which alone,
To that which tears the nerves, the toil of slaves
Is pleasure. Oh from such inhuman pains
May all be free who merit not the wheel! 365
But from the burning Lion when the sun
Pours down his sultry wrath, now while the blood
Too much already maddens in the veins,
And all the finer fluids thro' the skin
Explore their flight, me near the cool cascade 370
Reclin'd, or saunt'ring in the lofty grove,
No needless slight occasion should engage
To pant and sweat beneath the fiery noon:
Now the fresh morn alone and mellow eve
To shady walks and active rural sports 375

Invite ; but while the chilling dews descend
 May nothing tempt you to the cold embrace
 Of humid skies, tho' it is no vulgar joy
 To trace the horrors of the solemn wood
 While the soft ev'ning saddens into night, 380
 Tho' the sweet poet of the vernal groves
 Melts all the night in strains of amorous woe.

The shades descend, and midnight o'er the world
 Expands her sable wings ; great Nature droops
 Thro' all her works : now happy he whose toil 385
 Has o'er his languid pow'rless limbs diffus'd
 A pleasing lassitude ; he not in vain
 Invokes the gentle deity of Dreams :
 His pow'rs the most voluptuously dissolve
 In soft repose ; on him the balmy dews 390
 Of sleep with double nutriment descend.
 But would you sweetly waste the blank of night
 In deep oblivion, or on Fancy's wings
 Visit the paradise of happy Dreams,
 And waken cheerful as the lively Morn ? 395
 Oppress not nature sinking down to rest
 With feasts too late, too solid, or too full,
 But be the first concoction half matur'd
 Ere you to mighty indolence resign
 Your passive faculties. He from the toils 400
 And troubles of the day to heavier toil
 Retires, whom trembling from the tow'r that rocks
 Amid the clouds or Calpe's hideous height
 The busy demons hurl, or in the main
 O'erwhelm, or bury struggling under ground. 405
 Not all a monarch's luxury the woes
 Can counterpoise of that most wretched man
 Whose nights are shaken with the frantic fits
 Of wild Orestes, whose delirious brain, 409
 Stung by the Furies, works with poison'd thought,
 While pale and monstrous painting shocks the soul,
 And mangled Consciousness bemoans itself
 For ever torn, and chaos floating round.
 What dreams presage, what danger these or those
 Portend to sanity, tho' prudent seers 455

Reveal'd of old, and men of deathless fame,
 We would not to the superstitious mind
 Suggest new throbs, new vanities of fear :
 'Tis our's to teach you from the peaceful night
 To banish omens, and all restless woes.

420

In study some protract the silent hours,
 Which others consecrate to mirth and wine,
 And sleep till noon, and hardly live till night.
 But surely this redeems not from the shades
 One hour of life. Nor does it aught avail
 What season you to drowsy Morpheus give
 Of th' ever-varying circle of the day,
 Or whether thro' the tedious winter gloom
 You tempt the midnight or the morning damps.
 The body fresh and vigorous from repose
 Defies the early fogs, but by the toils
 Of wakeful day exhausted and unstrung
 Weakly resists the night's unwholesome breath.
 The grand discharge, th' effusion of the skin,
 Slowly impair'd, the languid maladies
 Creep on, and thro' the sick'ning functions steal ;
 As when the chilling east invades the spring
 The delicate Narcissus pines away
 In hectic languor, and a slow disease
 Taints all the family of flow'rs, condemn'd
 To cruel heav'ns. But why, already prone
 To fade, should Beauty cherish its own bane ?
 O shame ! O pity ! nipt with pale quadrille
 And midnight cares the bloom of Albion dies.

425

430

435

440

445

By toil subdu'd the warrior and the hind
 Sleep fast and deep ; their active functions soon
 With gen'rous streams the subtle tubes supply,
 And soon the tonic irritable nerves
 Feel the fresh impulse, and awake the soul.
 The sons of Indolence with long repose
 Grow torpid, and with slowest Lethe drunk
 Feebly and ling'ringly return to life,
 Blunt ev'ry sense and pow'rless ev'ry limb.
 Ye prone to sleep ! (whom sleeping most annoys)
 On the hard mattrafs or elastic couch

450

455

Extend your limbs, and wean yourselves from sloth,
 Nor grudge the lean projector of dry brain,
 And springy nerves, the blandishments of down,
 Nor envy while the bury'd Bacchanal
 Exhales his surfeit in prolixer dreams.

460

He without riot in the balmy feast
 Of life, the wants of nature has supply'd
 Who rises cool, serene, and full of soul.
 But pliant Nature more or less demands
 As custom forms her, and all sudden change
 She hates of habit, e'en from bad to good.
 If faults in life, or new emergencies
 From habits urge you by long time confirm'd,
 Slow may the change arrive, and stage by stage,
 Slow as the shadow o'er the dial moves,
 Slow as the stealing progress of the year.

465

470

Observe the circling year, how unperceiv'd
 Her seasons change! behold by slow degrees
 Stern winter tam'd into a milder spring,
 The ripen'd spring a milder summer glows,
 Departing summer sheds Pomona's store,
 And aged Autumn brews the winter storm.
 Slow as they come these dangers come not void
 Of mortal shocks: the cold and torrid reigns,
 The two great periods of th' important year,
 Are in their first approaches seldom safe:
 Funereal Autumn all the sickly dread,
 And the black Fates deform the lovely spring.
 He well advis'd who taught our wiser fires
 Early to borrow Muscovy's warm spoils,
 Ere the first frost has touch'd the tender blade,
 And late resign them, tho' the wanton Spring
 Should deck her charms with all her sister's rays;
 For while th' effluence of the skin maintains
 Its native measure, the pleuritic Spring
 Glides harmless by, and Autumn, sick to death
 With fallow quartans, no contagion breathes.

475

480

485

490

I in prophetic numbers could unfold
 The omens of the year, what seasons teem
 With what diseases, what the humid south

495

Prepares, and what the demon of the east;
 But you perhaps refuse the tedious song.
 Besides, whatever plagues in heat or cold,
 Or drought, or moisture, dwell, they hurt not you,
 Skill'd to correct the vices of the sky, 500
 And taught already how to each extreme
 To bend your life. But should the public bane
 Infect you, or some trespass of your own,
 Or flaw of nature hint mortality,
 Soon as a not unpleasing horror glides 505
 Along the spine thro' all your torpid limbs,
 When first the head throbs, or the stomach feels
 A sickly load, a weary pain the loins,
 Be Celsus call'd: the Fates come rushing on;
 The rapid Fates admit of no delay. 510
 While wilful you, and fatally secure,
 Expect to morrow's more auspicious sun,
 The growing pest, whose infancy was weak,
 And easy vanquish'd, with triumphant sway
 O'erpow'rs your life. For want of timely care 515
 Millions have dy'd of medicable wounds.

Ah! in what perils is vain life engag'd!
 What slight neglects, what trivial faults, destroy
 The hardiest frame! Of indolence, of toil,
 We die; of want, of superfluity. 520
 The all-surrounding heav'n, the vital air,
 Is big with death: and tho' the putrid south
 Be shut, tho' no convulsive agony
 Shake from the deep foundations of the world
 Th' imprison'd plagues, a secret venom oft' 525
 Corrupts the air, the water, and the land.
 What livid deaths has sad Byzantium seen!
 How oft' has Cairo, with a mother's woe,
 Wept o'er her slaughter'd sons and lonely streets!
 E'en Albion, girt with less malignant skies, 530
 Albion the poison of the gods has drank,
 And felt the sting of monsters all her own.

Ere yet the fell Plantagenets had spent
 Their ancient rage at Bosworth's purple field,
 While for which tyrant England should receive 535

Her legions in incestuous murders mix'd,
 And daily horrors, till the Fates were drunk
 With kindred-blood by kindred-hands profus'd,
 Another plague of more gigantic arm
 Arose, a monster never known before,
 Rear'd from Cocytus its portentous head :
 This rapid Fury, not like other pests,
 Pursu'd a gradual course, but in a day
 Rush'd as a storm o'er half th' astonish'd isle,
 And strew'd with sudden carcases the land.

540

545

First thro' the shoulders, or whatever part
 Was seiz'd the first, a fervid vapour sprung ;
 With rash combustion thence the quiv'ring spark
 Shot to the heart, and kindled all within,
 And soon the surface caught the spreading fires :
 Thro' all the yielding pores the melted blood
 Gush'd out in smoky sweats ; but nought assuag'd
 The torrid heat within, nor aught reliev'd
 The stomach's anguish. With incessant toil,
 Desp'rate of ease, impatient of their pain,
 They toss'd from side to side. In vain the stream
 Ran full and clear ; they burnt and thirsted still.
 The restless arteries with rapid blood
 Beat strong and frequent : thick and pantingly
 The breath was fetch'd, and with huge lab'ring heav'd.
 At last a heavy pain oppress'd the head ;
 A wild delirium came : their weeping friends
 Were strangers now, and this no home of theirs.
 Harra's'd with toil on toil the sinking pow'rs
 Lay prostrate and o'erthrown : a pond'rous sleep
 Wrapt all the senses up. They slept and dy'd.

550

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561

565

In some a gentle horror crept at first
 O'er all the limbs : the sluices of the skin
 Withheld their moisture, till by art provok'd
 The sweats o'erflow'd, but in a clammy tide,
 Now free and copious, now restrain'd and slow,
 Of tinctures various, as the temperature
 Had mix'd the blood, and rank with fetid steams,
 As if the pent-up humours by delay
 Were grown more fell, more putrid, and malign.

570

575

ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.

53

That animates and moulds the grosser frame,
 And when the body sinks escapes to heav'n,
 Its native seat, and mixes with the gods : 15
 Meanwhile this heav'nly particle pervades
 The mortal elements, in ev'ry nerve
 It thrills with pleasure, or grows mad with pain,
 And in its secret conclave, as it feels
 The body's woes and joys, this ruling pow'r 20
 Wields at its will the dull material world,
 And is the body's Health or malady.

By its own toil the gross corporeal frame
 Fatigues, extenuates, or destroys, itself.
 Nor less the labours of the mind corrode 25
 The solid fabric; for by subtile parts
 And viewless atoms secret Nature moves
 The mighty wheels of this stupendous world :
 By subtile fluids, pour'd thro' subtile tubes,
 The natural vital functions are perform'd : 30
 By these the stubborn aliments are tam'd,
 The toiling heart distributes life and strength ;
 These the still crumbling frame rebuild, and these
 Are lost in thinking, and dissolve in air.

But 'tis not thought, (for still the soul's employ'd,)
 'Tis painful thinking, that corrodes our clay. 36
 All day the vacant eye, without fatigue,
 Strays o'er the heav'n and earth, but long intent
 On microscopic arts its vigour fails.
 Just so the mind, with various thoughts amus'd, 40
 Nor aches itself, nor gives the body pain ;
 But anxious study, discontent, and care,
 Love without hope, and hate without revenge,
 And fear, and jealousy, fatigue the soul,
 Engross the subtile ministers of life, 45
 And spoil the lab'ring functions of their share :
 Hence the lean gloom that Melancholy wears,
 The lover's paleness, and the fallow hue
 Of Envy, Jealousy, the meagre stare
 Of sore Revenge : the canker'd body hence 50
 Betrays each fretful motion of the mind.

The strong-built pedant, who both night and day
 Feeds on the coarsest fare the schools bestow,
 And crudely fattens at gross Burman's stall,
 O'erwhelm'd with phlegm lies in a dropsy drown'd, 55
 Or sinks in lethargy before his time.

With useful studies you, and arts that please,
 Employ your mind ; amuse but not fatigue.
 Peace to each drowsy metaphysic sage,
 And ever may all heavy systems rest ! 60

Yet some there are e'en of elastic parts
 Whom strong and obstinate ambition leads
 Thro' all the rugged roads of barren lore,
 And gives to relish what their gen'rous taste
 Would else refuse ; but may nor thirst of fame, 65
 Nor love of knowledge, urge you to fatigue,
 With constant drudgery, the lib'ral soul.

Toy with your books ; and as the various fits
 Of humour seize you, from philosophy
 To fable shift, from serious Antonine 70
 To Rabelais' ravings, and from prose to song.

While reading pleases but no longer read,
 And read aloud, resounding Homer's strain,
 And wield the thunder of Demosthenes.
 The chest so exercis'd improves its strength, 75
 And quick vibrations thro' the bowels drive
 The restless blood, which in unactive-days
 Would loiter else thro' unelastic tubes.

Deem it not trifling while I recommend
 What posture suits : to stand and sit by turns, 80
 As Nature prompts is best ; but o'er your leaves
 To lean for ever cramps the vital parts,
 And robs the fine machin'ry of its play.

'Tis the great art of life to manage well
 The restless mind ; for ever on pursuit 85
 Of knowledge bent it starves the grosser pow'rs :
 Quite unemploy'd, against its own repose
 It turns its fatal edge, and sharper pangs
 Than what the body knows embitter life ;
 Chiefly where Solitude, sad nurse of Care, 90
 To sickly musing gives the pensive mind :

ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.

57

Here lay their hopes, (tho' little hope remain'd,)
 With full effusion of perpetual sweats
 To drive the venom out: and here the Fates
 Were kind, that long they linger'd not in pain;
 For who surviv'd the sun's diurnal race
 Rose from the dreary gates of hell redeem'd,
 Some the sixth hour oppress'd, and some the third.

580

Of many thousands few untainted 'scap'd,
 Of those infected fewer 'scap'd alive;
 Of those who liv'd some felt a second blow,
 And whom the second spar'd a third destroy'd.
 Frantic with fear they sought by flight to shun
 The fierce contagion. O'er the mournful land
 Th' infected City poured her hurrying swarms:
 Rous'd by the flames that fir'd her seats around,
 Th' infected Country rush'd into the Town.

585

590

Some sad at home, and in the desert some,
 Abjur'd the fatal commerce of mankind.
 In vain; where'er they fled the Fates pursu'd.
 Others with hopes more specious cross'd the main,
 To seek protection in far distant skies;

595

But none they found. It seem'd the gen'ral air
 From pole to pole, from Atlas to the east,
 Was then at enmity with English blood;
 For but the race of England all were safe
 In foreign climes; nor did this Fury taste
 The foreign blood which England then contain'd.
 Where should they fly? the circumambient heav'n
 Involv'd them still, and ev'ry breeze was bane:

600

Where find relief? the salutary art
 Was mute, and, startled at the new disease,
 In fearful whispers hopeless omens gave.

605

To Heav'n with suppliant rites they sent their pray'rs;
 Heav'n heard them not. Of ev'ry hope depriv'd,
 Fatigu'd with vain resources, and subdu'd

610

With woes resistless, and enfeebling fear,
 Passive they sunk beneath the weighty blow.
 Nothing but lamentable sounds were heard,
 Nor aught was seen but ghastly views of death.
 Infectious horror ran from face to face,

615

And pale despair. 'Twas all the bus'ness then
To tend the sick, and in their turns to die.
In heaps they fell; and oft' the bed, they say,
The sick'ning, dying, and the dead contain'd.

Ye guardian Gods! on whom the fates depend 620
Of tott'ring Albion, ye eternal Fires

That lead thro' heav'n the wandering year! ye Pow'rs
That o'er th' encircling elements preside!

May nothing worse than what this age has seen
Arrive! Enough abroad, enough at home, 625

Has Albion bled. Here a distemper'd heav'n

Has thinn'd her cities from those lofty cliffs

That awe proud Gaul to Thule's wintry reign,

While in the West beyond th' Atlantic foam,

Her bravest sons, keen for the fight, have dy'd 630

The death of cowards, and of common men,

Sunk void of wounds, and fall'n without renown.

But from these views the weeping Muses turn,
And other themes invite my wand'ring song. 634

THE

ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.

BOOK IV. THE PASSIONS.

THE choice of Aliment, the choice of Air,

The use of Toil, and all external things,

Already sung, it now remains to trace

What good what evil from ourselves proceeds,

And how the subtle principle within

Inspires with Health, or mines with strange decay 5

The passive body. Ye poetic shades,

Who know the secrets of the world unseen,

Assist my song! for in a doubtful theme

Engag'd I wander thro' mysterious ways. 10

There is they say (and I believe there is)

A spark within us of th' immortal fire

And sanguine hopes dispel your fleeting care,
 And what was difficult and what was dire
 Yields to your prowess and superior stars :
 The happiest you of all that e'er were mad, 175
 Or are or shall be, could this folly last.
 But soon your heav'n is gone ; a heavier gloom
 Shuts o'er your head, and as the thund'ring stream,
 Swol'n o'er its banks with sudden mountain rain,
 Sinks from its tumult to a silent brook, 180
 So when the frantic raptures in your breast
 Subside you languish into mortal man ;
 You sleep, and waking find yourself undone :
 For prodigal of life, in one rash night
 You lavish'd more than might support three days. 185
 A heavy morning comes ; your cares return
 With tenfold rage. An anxious stomach well
 May be endur'd, so may the throbbing head ;
 But such a dim delirium, such a dream,
 Involves you, such a dastardly despair 190
 Unmans your soul, as madd'ning Pentheus felt
 When baited round Cithæron's cruel sides
 He saw two suns and double Thebes ascend.
 You curse the sluggish Port, you curse the wretch,
 The felon, with unnat'ral mixture first 195
 Who dar'd to violate the virgin wine,
 Or on the fugitive Champaign you pour
 A thousand curses, for to heav'n it rapt
 Your soul to plunge you deeper in despair :
 Perhaps you rue e'en that divinest gift, 200
 The gay, serene, good-natur'd, Burgundy,
 Or the fresh fragrant vintage of the Rhine,
 And wish that Heav'n from mortals had withheld
 The grape, and all intoxicating bowls.
 Besides, it wounds you sore to recollect 205
 What follies in your loose unguarded hour
 Escap'd. For one irrevocable word,
 Perhaps that meant no harm, you lose a friend ;
 Or in the rage of wine your hasty hand
 Performs a deed to haunt you to the grave : 210
 Add that your means, your health, your parts, decay ;

Your friends avoid you ; brutishly transform'd
 They hardly know you ; or if one remains
 To wish you well, he wishes you in heav'n.
 Despis'd, unwept, you fall, who might have left 215
 A sacred, cherish'd, sadly-pleasing, name,
 A name still to be utter'd with a sigh.
 Your last ungraceful scene has quite effac'd
 All sense and mem'ry of your former worth.

How to live happiest, how avoid the pains, 220
 The disappointments, and disgusts, of those
 Who would in pleasure all their hours employ,
 The precepts here of a divine old man
 I could recite. Tho' old he still retain'd
 His manly sense, and energy of mind. 225
 Virtuous and wise he was, but not severe:
 He still remember'd that he once was young ;
 His easy presence check'd no decent joy.
 Him e'en the dissolute admir'd, for he
 A graceful looseness when he pleas'd put on, 230
 And laughing could instruct. Much had he read,
 Much more had seen : he study'd from the life,
 And in the original perus'd mankind.

Vers'd in the woes and vanities of life
 He pity'd man, and much he pity'd those 235
 Whom falsely-smiling Fate has curs'd with means
 To dissipate their days in quest of joy.
 " Our aim is happiness ; 'tis your's, 'tis mine,
 (He said ;) 'tis the pursuit of all that live ;
 " Yet few attain it, if 'twas e'er attain'd : 240
 " But they the widest wander from the mark
 " Who thro' the flow'ry paths of saunt'ring joy
 " Seek this coy goddess, that from stage to stage
 " Invites us still, but shifts as we pursue :
 " For not to name the pains that pleasure brings 245
 " To counterpoise itself, relentless Fate
 " Forbids that we thro' gay voluptuous wilds
 " Should ever roam ; and were the Fates more kind
 " Our narrow luxuries would soon grow stale : 249
 " Were these exhaustless Nature would grow sick,
 " And cloy'd with pleasure squeamishly complain

ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.

55

There madness enters ; and the dim-ey'd fiend,
 Sour Melancholy, night and day provokes
 Her own eternal wound : the sun grows pale,
 A mournful visionary light o'erspreads
 The cheerful face of Nature, earth becomes
 A dreary desert, and Heav'n frowns above :
 Then various shapes of curs'd illusion rise :
 Whate'er the wretch'd fears creating Fear
 Forms out of nothing, and with monsters teems
 Unknown in hell. The prostrate soul beneath
 A load of huge imagination heaves,
 And all the horrors that the murd'rer feels
 With anxious flutt'ring wake the guiltless breast.

95

100

Such phantoms Pride in solitary scenes,
 Or Fear on delicate Self love creates.
 From other cares absolv'd, the busy mind
 Finds in yourself a theme to pore upon ;
 It finds you miserable or makes you so :
 For while yourself you anxiously explore
 Timorous Self-love, with sick'ning Fancy's aid,
 Presents the danger that you dread the most,
 And ever galls you in your tender part :
 Hence some for love, and some for jealousy,
 For grim religion some, and some for pride,
 Have lost their reason ; some for fear of want
 Want all their lives ; and others ev'ry day
 For fear of dying suffer worse than death.
 Ah ! from your bosoms banish if you can
 Those fatal guests, and first the demon Fear,
 That trembles at impossible events,
 Lest aged Atlas should resign his load,
 And heav'n's eternal battlements rush down.
 Is there an evil worse than fear itself ?
 And what avails it that indulgent Heav'n
 From mortal eyes has wrapt the woes to come
 If we ingenious to torment ourselves
 Grow pale at hideous fictions of our own ?
 Enjoy the present, nor with needless cares
 Of what may spring from blind Misfortune's womb
 Appal the surest hour that life bestows.

105

110

115

120

125

131

Serene, and master of yourself, prepare
For what may come, and leave the rest to Heav'n.

Off' from the body, by long ails mistun'd,
These evils sprung the most important Health, 135
That of the mind, destroy; and when the mind
They first invade the conscious body soon
In sympathetic languishment declines.

These chronic Passions, while from real woes
They rise, and yet without the body's fault 140
Infest the soul, admit one only cure,
Diversión, hurry, and a restless life.
Vain are the consolations of the wise;

In vain your friends would reason down your pain.
O ye whose souls relentless love has tam'd 145
To soft distress, or friends untimely fall'n!

Court not the luxury of tender thought,
Nor deem it impious to forget those pains
That hurt the living, nought avail the dead.
Go, soft Enthusiast! quit the cypress groves, 150

Nor to the rivulet's lonely moanings tune
Your sad complaint: go seek the cheerful haunts
Of men, and mingle with the bustling crowd;
Lay schemes for wealth, or pow'r, or fame, the wish
Of nobler minds, and push them night and day, 155
Or join the caravan in quest of scenes

New to your eyes, and shifting ev'ry hour,
Beyond the Alps, beyond the Apennines,
Or, more advent'rous, rush into the field
Where war grows hot, and raging thro' the sky 160
The lofty trumpet swells the madd'ning soul,
And in the hardy camp and toilsome march
Forget all softer and less manly cares.

But most, too passive, when the blood runs low,
Too weakly indolent to strive with pain, 165
And bravely by resisting conquer Fate,
Try Circe's arts, and in the tempting bowl
Of poison'd nectar sweet oblivion swill.

Struck by the pow'rful charm the gloom dissolves
In empty air, Elysium opens round, 170
A pleasing frenzy buoys the lighten'd soul,

ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.

59

- " That all is vanity, and life a dream.
 " Let Nature rest : be busy for yourself
 " And for your friend ; be busy e'en in vain
 " Rather than tease her sated appetites. 255
 " Who never fasts no banquet e'er enjoys ;
 " Who never toils or watches never sleeps.
 " Let Nature rest ; and when the taste of joy
 " Grows keen indulge, but shun satiety.
 " 'Tis not for mortals always to be blest, 260
 " But him the least the dull or painful hours
 " Of life oppress, whom sober Sense conducts,
 " And Virtue thro' this labyrinth we tread.
 " Virtue and Sense I mean not to disjoin ;
 " Virtue and Sense are one : and trust me still 265
 " A faithless heart betrays the head unsound.
 " Virtue (for mere Good-nature is a fool)
 " Is sense, and spirit with humanity :
 " 'Tis sometimes angry, and its frown confounds ;
 " 'Tis e'en vindictive, but in vengeance just. 270
 " Knaves fain would laugh at it ; some great ones dare ;
 " But at his heart the most undaunted son
 " Of Fortune dreads its name and awful charms.
 " To noblest uses this determines wealth ;
 " This is the solid pomp of prosp'rous days, 275
 " The peace and shelter of adversity :
 " And if you pant for glory build your fame
 " On this foundation, which the secret shock
 " Defies of Envy and all-sapping Time.
 " The gaudy gloss of Fortune only strikes 280
 " The vulgar eye : the suffrage of the wise,
 " The praise that's worth ambition, is attain'd
 " By Sense alone and dignity of mind.
 " Virtue, the strength and beauty of the soul,
 " Is the best gift of Heav'n, a happiness 285
 " That e'en above the smiles and frowns of Fate
 " Exalts great Nature's fav'rites, a wealth
 " That ne'er incumbers nor can be transferr'd.
 " Riches are oft' by guilt and baseness earn'd,
 " Or dealt by Chance to shield a lucky knave, 290
 " Or throw a cruel sunshine on a fool ;

" But for one end, one much-neglected use,
 " Are riches worth your care : (for Nature's wants
 " Are few, and without opulence supply'd)
 " This noble end is to produce the soul, 295
 " To shew their virtues in their fairest light,
 " To make Humanity the minister
 " Of bounteous Providence, and teach the breast
 " That gen'rous luxury the gods enjoy."

Thus in his graver vein the friendly sage 300
 Sometimes declaim'd. Of right and wrong he taught
 Truths as refin'd as ever Athens heard,
 And (strange to tell!) he practis'd what he preach'd.
 Skill'd in the Passions, how to check their sway
 He knew, as far as Reason can controul 305
 The lawless pow'rs. But other cares are mine :
 Form'd in the school of Pæon I relate
 What Passions hurt the body, what improve ;
 Avoid them or invite them as you may.

Know then, whatever cheerful and serene 310
 Supports the mind supports the body too :
 Hence the most vital movement mortals feel
 Is hope, the balm and life blood of the soul :
 It pleases, and it lasts. Indulgent Heav'n
 Sent down the kind delusion thro' the paths 315
 Of rugged life to lead us patient on,
 And make our happiest state no tedious thing.
 Our greatest good, and what we least can spare,
 Is hope ; the last of all our evils fear.

But there are Passions grateful to the breast 320
 And yet no friends to life : perhaps they please
 Or to excess, and dissipate the soul,
 Or while they please torment. The stubborn clown,
 The ill-fam'd ruffian, and pale usurer,
 (If Love's omnipotence such hearts can mould) 325
 May safely mellow into love, and grow
 Refin'd, humane, and gen'rous, if they can.
 Love in such bosoms never to a fault
 Or pains or pleasures : but ye finer Souls !
 Form'd to soft luxury, and prompt to thrill 330
 With all the tumults, all the joys and pain,

That beauty gives, with caution and reserve
 Indulge the sweet destroyer of repose,
 Nor court too much the queen of charming cares;
 For while the cherish'd poison in your breast 35
 Ferments and maddens, sick with jealousy,
 Absence, distrust, or e'en with anxious joy,
 The wholesome appetites and pow'rs of life
 Dissolve in languor: the coy stomach loathes
 The genial board; your cheerful days are gone; 34
 The gen'rous bloom that flush'd your cheeks is fled:
 To sighs devoted and to tender pains
 Pensive you sit, or solitary stray,
 And waste your youth in musing: musing first
 Toy'd into care your unsuspecting heart; 345
 It found a liking there, a sportful fire,
 And that fomented into serious love,
 Which musing daily strengthens and improves
 Thro' all the heights of fondness and romance;
 And you're undone, the fatal shaft has sped, 35
 If once you doubt whether you love or no:
 The body wastes away, th' infected mind,
 Dissolv'd in female tenderness, forgets
 Each manly virtue, and grows dead to fame.
 Sweet Heav'n! from such intoxicating charms 355
 Defend all worthy breasts! not that I deem
 Love always dang'rous, always to be shunn'd;
 Love well repaid, and not too weakly sunk
 In wanton and unmanly tenderness,
 Adds bloom to Health, o'er ev'ry virtue sheds 360
 A gay, humane, a sweet, and gen'rous, grace,
 And brightens all the ornaments of man:
 But fruitless, hopeless, disappointed, rack'd
 With jealousy, fatigu'd with hope and fear,
 Too serious, or too languishingly fond, 365
 Unnerves the body, and unmans the soul.
 And some have dy'd for love, and some run mad,
 And some with desp'rate hands themselves have slain.
 Some to extinguish, others to prevent,
 A mad devotion to one dang'rous fair 370
 Court all they meet, in hopes to dissipate

The cares of love amongst an hundred brides.
 Th' event is doubtful ; for there are who find
 A cure in this, there are who find it not.
 'Tis no relief alas ! it rather galls 375
 The wound to those who are sincerely sick ;
 For while from fev'rish and tumultuous joys
 The nerves grow languid, and the soul subsides,
 The tender fancy smarts with ev'ry sting,
 And what was love before is madness now. 380
 Is Health your care, or luxury your aim ?
 Be temp'rate still : when Nature bids obey ;
 Her wild impatient sallies bear no curb :
 But when the prurient habit of delight
 Or loose imagination spurs you on 385
 To deeds above your strength, impute it not
 To Nature ; Nature all compulsion hates.
 Ah ! let nor luxury nor vain renown
 Urge you to feats you well might sleep without,
 To make what should be rapture a fatigue, 390
 A tedious task, nor in the wanton arms
 Of twining Lais melt your manhood down ;
 For from the colliquation of soft joys
 How chang'd you rise ! the ghost of what you was !
 Languid and melancholy, and gaunt and wan, 395
 Your veins exhausted, and your nerves unstrung.
 Spoil'd of its balm and sprightly zest, the blood
 Grows vapid phlegm ; along the tender nerves
 (To each slight impulse tremblingly awake)
 A subtle fiend that mimics all the plagues, 400
 Rapid and restless springs from part to part :
 The blooming honours of your youth are fall'n,
 Your vigour pines, your vital pow'rs decay,
 Diseases haunt you, and untimely age
 Creeps on, unsocial, impotent, and lewd. 405
 Infatuate, impious, Epicure ! to waste
 The stores of pleasure, cheerfulness, and Health !
 Infatuate all who make delight their trade,
 And coy perdition ev'ry hour pursue.
 Who pines with love, or in lascivious flames 410
 Consumes, is with his own consent undone :

He chuses to be wretched, to be mad,
 And warn'd proceeds and wilful to his fate.
 But there is a Passion whose tempestuous sway
 Tears up each virtue planted in the breast, 415
 And shakes to ruins proud Philosophy :
 For pale and trembling Anger rushes in
 With falt'ring speech, and eyes that wildly stare,
 Fierce as the tiger, madder than the seas,
 Desp'rate, and arm'd with more than human strength.
 How soon the calm, humane, and polish'd, man 421
 Forgets compunction, and starts up a fiend !
 Who pines in love, or wastes with silent cares,
 Envy or ignominy, or tender grief,
 Slowly descends and ling'ring to the shades ; 425
 But he whom anger stings drops if he dies
 At, once, and rushes apoplectic down,
 Or a fierce fever hurries him to hell :
 For as the body thro' unnumber'd strings
 Reverberates each vibration of the soul, 430
 As is the Passion such is still the pain
 The body feels or chronic or acute ;
 And oft' a sudden storm at once o'erpow'rs
 The life, or gives your reason to the winds.
 Such fates attend the rash alarm of fear 435
 And sudden grief, and rage, and sudden joy.

There are meantime to whom the boist'rous fit
 Is Health, and only fills the sails of life :
 For where the mind a torpid winter leads,
 Wrapt in a body corpulent and cold, 440
 And each clogg'd function lazily moves on,
 A gen'rous sally spurns th' incumbent load,
 Unlocks the breast, and gives a cordial glow.
 But if your wrathful blood is apt to boil,
 Or are your nerves too irritably strung, 445
 Wave all dispute ; be cautious if you joke ;
 Keep lent for ever, and forswear the bowl ;
 For one rash moment sends you to the shades,
 Or shatters ev'ry hopeful scheme of life,
 And gives to horror all your days to come. 450
 Fate arm'd with thunder, fire, and ev'ry plague

That ruins, tortures, or distracts, mankind,
 And makes the happy wretched in an hour,
 O'erwhelms you not with woes so horrible
 As your own wrath, nor gives more sudden blows. 455

While choler works, good Friend! you may be wrong;
 Distrust yourself, and sleep before you fight:
 'Tis not too late to-morrow to be brave;
 If Honour bids to-morrow kill or die.

But calm advice against a raging fit 460

Avails too little: and it braves the pow'r
 Of all that ever taught in prose or song
 To tame the fiend that sleeps a gentle lamb
 And wakes a lion. Unprovok'd and calm
 You reason well, see as you ought to see, 465

And wonder at the madness of mankind;
 Seiz'd with the common rage you soon forget
 The speculations of your wiser hours:
 Beset with Furies of all deadly shapes,
 Fierce and insidious, violent and slow, 470

With all that urge or lure us on to fate,
 What refuge shall we seek, what arms prepare?
 Where reason proves too weak, or void of wiles
 To cope with subtle or impetuous pow'rs,
 I would invoke new Passions to your aid; 475
 With indignation would extinguish fear,
 With fear or gen'rous pity vanquish rage,
 And love with pride, and force to force oppose.

There is a charm, a pow'r, that sways the breast,
 Bids ev'ry passion revel or be still, 480

Inspires with rage, or all your cares dissolves,
 Can sooth distraction, and almost despair:
 That pow'r is music; far beyond the stretch
 Of those unmeaning warblers on our stage,
 Those clumsy heroes, those fat-headed gods, 485

Who move no Passion justly but contempt,
 Who like our dancers (light indeed and strong!)
 Do wondrous feats, but never heard of grace.
 The fault is our's; we bear those monstrous arts,
 Good Heav'n! we praise them; we with loudest peals
 Applaud the fool that highest lifts his heels, 491

BENEVOLENCE.

65

And with insipid shew of rapture die
Of idiot notes impertinently long.
But he the Muse's laurel justly shares,
A poet he, and touch'd with Heav'n's own fire, 495
Who with bold rage or solemn pomp of sounds
Inflames, exalts, and ravishes, the soul;
Now tender, plaintive, sweet almost to pain,
In love dissolves you; now in sprightly strains
Breathes a gay rapture thro' your thrilling breast, 500
Or melts the heart with airs divinely sad,
Or wakes to horror the tremendous strings.
Such was the bard whose heav'nly strains of old
Appeas'd the fiend of melancholy Saul;
Such was, if old and Heathen fame say true, 505
The man who bad the Theban domes ascend,
And tam'd the savage nations with his song;
And such the Thracian whose melodious lyre
Tun'd to soft woe made all the mountains weep,
Sooth'd e'en th' inexorable pow'rs of hell, 510
And half redeem'd his lost Eurydice.
Music exalts each joy, allays each grief,
Expels diseases, softens ev'ry pain,
Subdues the rage of poison, and the plague;
And hence the wise of ancient days ador'd
One pow'r of Physic, Melody, and Song. 516

OF BENEVOLENCE.

AN EPISTLE TO EUMENES.

*First printed in the Year 1751.**

KIND to my frailties still Eumenes, hear;
Once more I try the patience of your ear,
Not oft' I sing: the happier for the Town;
So stunn'd already they're quite stupid grown
With monthly, daily—charming things I own. 5

* This little piece was addressed to a worthy gentleman, as an expression of gratitude for his kind endeavours to do the Author a great piece of service.

Happy for them I seldom court the Nine ;
Another art, a serious art, is mine.

Of nauseous verses offer'd once a week,

" You cannot say I did it " if you're sick.

'Twas ne'er my pride to shine by flashy fits

10

Amongst the daily, weekly, monthly, wits :

Content if some few friends indulge my name,

So slightly am I stung with love of fame,

I would not scrawl one hundred idle lines—

Not for the praise of all the Magazines.

15

Yet once a moon perhaps I steal a night,

And if our sire Apollo pleases write.

You smile ; but all the train the Muse that follow,

Christians and dunces, still we quote Apollo :

Unhappy still our poets will rehearse

20

To Goths, that stare astonish'd at their verse,

To the rank tribes submit their virgin lays ;

So gross, so bestial is the lust of praise !

I to sound judges from the mob appeal,

And write to those who most my subject feel.

25

Eumenes, these dry moral lines I trust

With you, whom nought that's moral can disgust :

With you I venture in plain homespun sense

What I imagine of Benevolence.

Of all the monsters of the humankind

30

What strikes you most is the low selfish mind.

You wonder how without one lib'ral joy

The steady miser can his years employ,

Without one friend, howe'er his fortunes thrive,

Despis'd and hated how he bears to live.

35

With honest warmth of heart, with some degree

Of pity that such wretched things should be,

You scorn the sordid knave.—He grins at you,

And deems himself the wiser of the two.—

'Tis all but taste howe'er we sift the case :

40

He has his joy, as ev'ry creature has.

'Tis true he cannot boast an angel's share,

Yet has what happiness his organs bear.

Thou likewise mad'st the high seraphic soul

Maker Omnipotent ! and thou the owl :

45

Heav'n form'd him too, and doubtless for some use,
But Cranecourt knows not yet all Nature's views.

'Tis chiefly taste, or blunt, or gross, or fine,
Makes life insipid, bestial, or divine.

Better be born with taste to little rent
Than the dull monarch of a continent. 50

Without this bounty, which the gods bestow,
Can Fortune make one fav'rite happy?—No :

As well might Fortune in her frolic vein
Proclaim an oyster sov'reign of the main. 55

Without fine nerves, and bosom justly warm'd,

An eye, an ear, a fancy to be charm'd,
In vain majestic Wren expands the dome,

Blank as pale stucco Rubens lines the room,
Lost are the raptures of bold Handel's strain, 60

Great Tully storins, sweet Virgil sings in vain ;

The beauteous forms of Nature are effac'd,

Tempe's soft charms, the raging wat'ry waste,

Each greatly wild, each sweet romantic scene,
Unheeded rises, and almost unseen. 65

Yet these are joys with some of better clay

To sooth the toils of life's embarrass'd way ;

These the fine frame with charming horrors chill,

And give the nerves delightfully to thrill.

But of all taste the noblest and the best, 70

The first enjoyment of the gen'rous breast,

Is to behold in man's obnoxious state

Scenes of content, and happy turns of fate :

Fair views of Nature, shining works of art,

Amuse the fancy, but those touch the heart. 75

Chiefly for this proud epic song delights,

For this some riot on th' Arabian Nights.

Each case is our's ; and for the human mind

'Tis monstrous not to feel for all mankind.

Were all mankind unhappy who could taste 80

Elysium, or be solitar'ly blest ?

Shock'd with surrounding shapes of human woe,

All that or sense or fancy could bestow

You would reject with sick and coy disdain,

And pant to see one cheerful face again.

But if life's better prospects to behold
 So much delight the man of gen'rous mould,
 How happy they, the great, the godlike few,
 Who daily cultivate this pleasing view!
 This is a joy possess'd by few indeed! 90
 Dame Fortune has so many fools to feed
 She cannot oft' afford, with all her store,
 To yield her smiles where Nature smil'd before.
 To sinking worth a cordial hand to lend,
 With better fortune to surprise a friend, 95
 To cheer the modest stranger's lonely state,
 Or snatch an orphan family from fate,
 To do, possess'd with virtue's noblest fire,
 Such gen'rous deeds as we with tears admire,
 Deeds that above ambition's vulgar aim 100
 Secure an amiable, a solid fame;
 These are such joys as Heav'n's first fav'rites seize;
 These please you now, and will for ever please.

Too seldom we great moral deeds admire;
 The will, the pow'rs, th' occasion, must conspire: 105
 Yet few there are so impotent and low
 But can some small good offices bestow:
 Small as they are, however cheap they come,
 They add still something to the gen'ral sum;
 And him who gives the little in his pow'r 110
 The world acquits, and Heav'n demands no more.

Unhappy he who feels each neighbour's woe,
 Yet no relief, no comfort can bestow!
 Unhappy too who feels each kind essay,
 And for great favours has but words to pay, 115
 Who scornful of the flatterer's fawning art
 Dreads e'en to pour his gratitude of heart,
 And with a distant lover's silent pain
 Must the best movements of his soul restrain!
 But men sagacious to explore mankind, 120
 Trace e'en the coyest passions of the mind.

Not only to the good we owe good-will;
 In good and bad distress demands it still:
 This with the gen'rous lays distinction low,
 Endears a friend, and recommends a foe. 125

Not that resentment never ought to rise,
 For e'en excess of virtue ranks with vice;
 And there are villainies no bench can awe,
 That sport without the limits of the law.
 No laws th' ungen'rous crime would reprehend 130
 Could I forget Eumenes was my friend:
 In vain the gibbet or the pill'ry claim
 The wretch who blasts a helpless virgin's fame.
 Where laws are dup'd its nor unjust nor mean
 To seize the proper time for honest spleen. 135
 An open candid foe I could not hate,
 Nor e'en insult the base in humbled state;
 But thriving Malice tamely to forgive—
 'Tis somewhat late to be so primitive.

But I detain you with these tedious lays, 140
 Which few perhaps would read and fewer praise.
 No matter, could I please the polish'd few
 Who taste the serious or the gay like you.
 The squeamish mob may find my verses bare
 Of ev'ry grace—but curse me if I care. 145
 Besides, I little court Parnassian fame;
 There's yet a better than a poet's name.
 'Twould more indulge my pride to hear it said
 That I with you the paths of honour tread,
 Than that amongst the proud poetic train 150
 No Modern boasted a more classic vein,
 Or that in numbers I let loose my song
 Smooth as the Tweed, and as the Severn strong. 153



TASTE.

AN EPISTLE TO A YOUNG CRITIC.

First printed in the Year 1753.

*Proferre quæ sentiat cur quisquam liber dubitet?—Malim, Menecule, solus
infanire, quam sobrius aut plebis aut patrum deliberationibus ignaviter
assentari.* *Autor Anonym. Fragm.*

RANGE from Tow'rhill all London to the Fleet,
Thence round the Temple t' utmost Grosvenor
Street,

Take in your route both Gray's and Lincoln's Inn,
Miss not be sure my Lords and Gentlemen,
You'll hardly raise, as I with Petty * guess, 5
Above twelve thousand men of Taste, unless
In desp'rate times a Connoisseur may pass.

“Connoisseur! what's that?” 'Tis hard to say;
But you must oft' amidst the fair and gay
Have seen a wou'd be rake, a flutt'ring fool, 10
Who swears he loves the sex with all his soul.
Alas, vain Youth! dost thou admire sweet Jones?
'Thou be gallant without or blood or bones!

You'd split to hear th' insipid coxcomb cry,
“Ah charming Nanny! it is too much! I die!”— 15
“Die and be damn'd, (says one;) but let me tell ye
“I'll pay the loss if ever rapture kill ye.”

'Tis easy learnt the art to talk by rote,
At Nando's 'twill but cost you half a groat;
The Bedford School at three-pence is not dear Sir; 20
At White's—the stars instruct you for a tester:

But he whom Nature never meant to share
One spark of Taste will never catch it there—
Nor no where else, howe'er the booby beau
Grows great with Pope, and Horace, and Boileau. 25

Good native Taste, tho' rude, is seldom wrong,
Be it in music, painting, or in song:

* Sir William Petty, Author of The Political Arithmetic.

But this as well as other faculties
 Improves with age, and ripens by degrees.
 I know my Dear, 'tis needless to deny 't, 30
 You like Voiture; you think him wondrous bright;
 But sev'n years hence, your relish more matur'd,
 What now delights will hardly be endur'd.
 The boy may live to taste Racine's fine charms
 Whom Lee's bald orb or Rowe's dry rapture warms:
 But he enfranchis'd from his tutor's care, 36
 Who places Butler near Cervantes' chair,
 Or with Erasmus can admit to vie
 Brown of Squabhall, of merry memory,
 Will die a Goth, and nod at Woden's * feast 40
 Th' eternal winter long on Greg'ry's † breast.
 Long may he swill this patriarch of the dull
 The drowsy mum—but touch not Maro's skull!
 His holy barb'rous dotage fought to doom,
 Good Heav'n! th' immortal Classics to the tomb!—
 Those sacred lights shall bid new genius rise 46
 When all Rome's saints have rotted from the skies.
 Be these your guides if at the ivy crown
 You aim, each country's classics and your own;
 But chiefly with the Ancients pass your prime, 50
 And drink Castalia at the fountain's brim.
 The man to genuine Burgundy bred up,
 Soon starts the dash of Methuen in his cup.
 Those sov'reign masters of the Muse's skill,
 Are the true patterns of good writing still: 55
 Their ore was rich, and sev'n times purg'd of lead;
 Their art seem'd Nature, 'twas so finely hid.
 Tho' born with all the pow'rs of writing well,
 What pains it cost they did not blush to tell.
 Their ease (my Lords!) ne'er loung'd for want of fire,
 Nor did their rage thro' affectation tire; 61

* Alluding to the Gothic heaven, Woden's Hall, where the happy are forever employed in drinking beer, mum, and other comfortable liquors, out of the skulls of those whom they had slain in battle.

† Pope Gregory VI. distinguished by the name of St. Gregory, whose pious zeal in the time of barbarous ignorance and priestly tyranny exerted itself in demolishing to the utmost of his power all the remains of Heathen genius.

Free from all tawdry, and imposing glare,
 They trusted to their native grace of air :
 Rapt'rous and wild the trembling soul they seize,
 Or sly coy beauties steal it by degrees : 65
 The more you view them still the more they please.

Yet there are thousands of scholastic merit
 Who worm their sense out but ne'er taste their spirit,
 Witness each pedant under Bentley bred,
 Each commentator that e'er commented : 70
 (You scarce can seize a spot of plastic ground,
 With leagues of Dutch morafs so floated round)
 Witness—But Sir I hold a cautious pen,
 Lest I should wrong some honourable men.
 They grow enthusiasts too—'Tis true! 'tis pity! 75
 But 'tis not ev'ry lunatic that's witty.
 Some have run Maro—and some Milton—mad ;
 Ashley once turn'd a solid barber's head :
 Hear all that's said, or printed if you can,
 Ashley has turn'd more solid heads than one. 80

Let such admire each great or specious name,
 For right or wrong the joy to them's the same.
 "Right!" Yes, a thousand times.—Each fool has heard
 That Homer was a wonder of a bard.
 Despise them civilly with all my heart— 85
 But to convince them is a desp'rate part.
 Why should you tease one for what secret cause
 One dotes on Horace, or on Hudibras?
 'Tis cruel Sir, 'tis needless, to endeavour
 To teach a sot of Taste—he knows no flavour. 90
 To disunite I neither wish nor hope
 A stubborn blockhead from his fav'rite fop :
 Yes—fop I say, were Maro's self before 'em,
 For Maro's self grows dull as they pore o'er him.

But hear their raptures o'er some specious rhyme 95
 Dubb'd by the musk'd and greasy mob sublime ;
 For spleen's dear sake hear how a coxcomb prates,
 As clam'rous o'er his joys as fifty cats :
 "Music has charms to sooth a savage breast,
 "To soften rocks and oaks,"—and all the rest : 100

"I've heard"—Bless these long ears!—"Heav'ns,

"what a strain!

"Good God! what thunders burst in this Campaign!

"Hark, Waller warbles! Ah! how sweetly killing!

"Then that inimitable Splendid Shilling! 104

"Rowe breathes all Shakspeare here!—That ode of

"Is Spenser quite! egad his very fire!— [Prior

"As like"—Yes, faith! as gumflow'rs to the rose,

Or as to claret flat Minorca's dose;

As like as (if I am not grossly wrong)

Erle Robert's Mice to aught e'er Chaucer sung. 110

Read boldly, and unprejudic'd peruse

Each fav'rite modern e'en each ancient Muse.

With all the comic salt and tragic rage

The great stupendous genius of our stage,

Boast of our island, pride of humankind, 115

Had faults to which the boxes are not blind;

His frailties are to ev'ry gossip known,

Yet Milton's pedantries not shock the Town.

Ne'er be the dupe of names however high,

For some outlive good parts some misapply. 120

Each elegant Spectator you admire,

But must you therefore swear by Cato's fire?

Masks for the court, and oft' a clumsy jest,

Disgrac'd the Muse that wrought the Alchemist.

"But to the Ancients."—Faith! I am not clear, 125

For all the smooth round type of Elzevir,

That ev'ry work which lasts in prose or song

Two thousand years deserves to last so long:

For not to mention some eternal blades

Known only now in academic shades, 130

(Those sacred groves where raptur'd spirits stray,

And in word-hunting waste the livelong day)

Ancients whom none but curious critics scan,

Do read Messala's * praises if you can.

Ah! who but feels the sweet contagious smart 135

While soft Tibullus pours his tender heart?

* A poem of Tibullus in hexameter verse, as yawning and insipid as his Elegies are tender and natural.

With him the Loves and Muses melt in tears,
But not a word of some hexameters.

" You grow so squeamish and so dev'lish dry

" You'll call Lucretius vapid next." Not I: 140

Some find him tedious, others think him lame,

But if he lags his subject is to blame,

Rough weary roads thro' barren wilds he try'd,

Yet still he marches with true Roman pride;

Sometimes a meteor, gorgeous, rapid, bright, 145

He streams athwart the philosophic night.

Find you in Horace no insipid odes?—

He dar'd to tell us Homer sometimes nods;

And but for such a critic's hardy skill

Homer might slumber unsuspected still. 150

Tasteless, implicit, indolent, and tame,

At second-hand we chiefly praise or blame:

Hence it is, for else one knows not why nor how,

Some authors flourish for a year or two,

For many some; more wondrous still to tell 155

Farquhar yet lingers on the brink of hell:

Of solid merit others pine unknown;

A* first tho' Carlos* swimmingly went down

Poor Belvidera fail'd to melt the town:

Sunk in dead night the giant Milton lay 160

Till Somer's hand produc'd him to the day;

But thanks to Heav'n and Addison's good grace

Now ev'ry fop is charm'd with Chevy Chase.

Specious and sage the sov'reign of the flock

Led to the downs, or from the wave worn rock 165

Reluctant hurld, the tame implicit train

Or crop the downs or headlong seek the main:

As blindly we our solemn leaders follow,

And good, and bad, and execrable swallow.

Pray, on the first throng'd ev'ning of a play 170

That wears the *facies Hippocratica*†,

Strong lines of death, signs dire of reprobation,

Have you not seen the angel of salvation

* Don Carlos, a tragedy of Otway's, now long and justly forgotten, went off with great applause, while his Orphan, a somewhat better performance, and what is yet more strange his Venice Preserved, according to the theatrical anecdotes of those times, met with a very cold reception.

† The appearance of the face in the last stage of a consumption, as it is described by Hippocrates.

Appear sublime, with wife and solemn rap
To teach the doubtful rabble where to clap?— 175

The rabble knows not where our dramas shine,
But where the cane goes pat—"By G—that's fine!"

Judge for yourself, nor wait with timid phlegm
Till some illustrious pedant hum or hem. 179

The lords who starv'd Old Ben were learn'dly fond
Of Chaucer, whom with bungling toil they conn'd :
Their sons' whose ears bold Milton could not seize,
Would laugh o'er Ben like mad, and snuff and sneeze,
And swear, and seem as tickled as you please :

Their spawn, the pride of this sublimer age, 185

Feel to the toes and horns grave Milton's rage,
Tho' liv'd he now he might appeal with scorn
To lords, knights, 'squires, and doctors, yet unborn,

Or justly mad to Meloch's burning fane
Devote the choicest children of his brain. 190

Judge for yourself, and as you find report
Of wit as freely as of beef or port.

Zounds! shall a pert or bluff important wight,
Whose brain is fanciless, whose blood is white,
A mumbling ape of Taste, prescribe us laws 195

To try the poets, for no better cause
Than that he boasts *per ann.* ten thousand clear,
Yelps in the House, or barely sits a peer?

For shame! for shame! the lib'ral British soul
To stoop to any stale Dictator's rule! 200

I may be wrong, and often am no doubt,
But right or wrong with friends with foes't will out.

Thus 'tis perhaps my fault if I complain
Of trite invention and a flimsy vein,

Tame characters, uninteresting, jejune,
And passions dryly copy'd from Le Brun* :

For I would rather never judge than wrong
That friend of all men gen'rous Fenelon.

* First painter to Lewis XIV. who, to speak in fashionable French English, called himself Lewis the Great. Our sovereign lords the passions, love, Rage, Despair, &c. were graciously pleased to sit to him in their turns for their portraits, which he was generous enough to communicate to the public, to the great improvement no count of history painting. It was he who they said poisoned Lesueur, who, without half his advantages, in many other respects was so unreasonable and provoking as to display a genius with which his own could stand no comparison. It was he and his Gothic disciples who with fly scratches defaced the most masterly of this Le bueur's performances as often as their barbarous envy could singly reach them. Yet after all these achievements he died in his bed! a catastrophe which could not have happened to him in a country like this, where the fine arts are zealously and judiciously patronised as they are well understood.

But in the name of goodness ! must I be
The dupe of charms I never yet could see ? 210
And then to flatter where there is no reward—

Better be any patron-hunting bard,
Who half our lords with filthy praise besmears,
And sing an anthem to all ministers,
Taste th' Attic salt in ev'ry peer's poor rebus, 215
And crown each Gothic idol for a Phœbus.

Alas ! so far from free, so far from brave,
We dare not shew the little taste we have.
With us you'll see ev'n vanity control
The most refin'd sensations of the soul. 220

Sad Otway's scenes, great Shakespeare's we defy :
" Lard, Madam ! it is so unpolite to cry !—
" For shame, my Dear ! d'ye credit all this stuff ?—
" I vow—Well this is innocent enough ?"

At Athens long ago the ladies—(marry'd) 225
Dreamt not they misbehav'd tho' they miscarry'd
When a wild poet with licentious rage
Turn'd fifty Furies loose upon the stage.

They were so tender and so easy mov'd,
Heav'ns ! how the Grecian ladies must have lov'd !
For all the fine sensations still have dwelt 231

Perhaps where one was exquisitely felt :
Thus he who heav'nly Maro truly feels
Stands fix'd on Raphael, and at Handel thrills.
The grosser senses too, the taste, the smell, 235
Are likely truest where the fine prevail :

Who doubts that Horace must have cater'd well ?
Friend, I'm a shrewd observer, and will guess
What books you dote on from your fav'rite mests.
Brown and L'Estrange will surely charm wh me'er
The frothy pertness strikes of weak small beer. 241

Who steeps the calf's fat loin in greasy sauce
Will hardly loathe the praise that bastes an ass ;
Who riots on Scotch collops scorns not any
Inspid, fullsome, trashy, miscellany ; 245
And who devours what'er the cook can dish up
Will for a classic consecrate each bishop *

But I am sick of pen and ink, and you
Will find this Letter long enough. Adieu. 249

* See Felton's Classics.

IMITATIONS.

Advertisement to the Publisher.

THE following Imitation of Shakespeare, was one of our Author's first attempts in Poetry, made when he was very young: it helped to amuse the solitude of a winter past in a wild romantic country: and what is rather particular, was just finished when Mr. Thomson's celebrated Poem upon the same subject appeared. Mr. Thomson soon hearing of it, had the curiosity to procure a copy by the means of a common acquaintance. He shewed it to his poetical friends Mr. Mallet, Mr. Aaron Hill, and Dr. Young, who it seems did great honor to it, and the first mentioned gentleman wrote to one of his friends at Edinburgh, desiring that Author's leave to publish it, a request too flattering to youthful vanity to be resisted: but Mr. Mallet altered his mind, and this little piece has hitherto remained unpublished.

The other Imitations of Shakespeare happened to have been saved out of the ruins of an unfinished tragedy on the story of Tereus and Philomela, attempted upon an irregular and extravagant plan, at an age much too early for such achievements: however they are here exhibited for the sake of such guests as may like a little repast of scraps.

IMITATIONS.

IMITATIONS

OF SHAKESPEARE.

NOW Summer with her wanton court is gone
To revel on the south side of the world,
And flaunt and frolic out the livelong day;
While Winter rising pale from northern seas
Shakes from his hoary locks the drizzling rheum: 5
A blast so shrewd makes the tall body'd pines
Unfinew'd bend, and heavy-paced bears
Sends growling to their savage tenements.

Now blows the surly north, and chills throughout
The stiff'ning regions, while by stronger charms 10
Than Circe e'er or fell Medea brew'd,
Each brook that wont to prattle to its banks
Lies all bestill'd and wedg'd betwixt its banks,
Nor moves the wither'd reeds; and the rash flood
That from the mountains held its headstrong course,
Bury'd in livid sheets of vaulting ice, 16
Seen thro' the shameful breaches, idly creeps
To pay a scanty tribute to the ocean.

What wonder? when the floating wilderness
That scorns our miles, and calls geography 20
A shallow pryer, from whose unsteady mirror
The high-hung pole surveys his dancing locks,
When this still raving deep lies mute and dead,
Nor heaves its swelling bosom to the winds.

The surges baited by the fierce north-east, 25
Tossing with fretful spleen their angry heads
To roar and rush together.

E'en in the foam of all their madness struck
To monumental ice stand all astride
The rocks they wash'd so late. Such execution, 30
So stern, so sudden, wrought the grisly aspect
Of terrible Medusa ere young Perseus

With his keen sabre cropt her horrid head,
 And laid her serpents rolling in the dust,
 When wand'ring thro' the woods she frown'd to stone
 Their savage tenants ; just as the foaming lion 36
 Sprung furious on his prey her speedier pow'r
 Out run his haste : no time to languish in,
 But fix'd in that fierce attitude he stands
 Like Rage in marble.—Now portly Argosies 40
 Lie wedgd 'twixt Neptune's ribs. The bridg'd abyss
 Has chang'd our ships to horses ; the swift bark
 Yields to the heavy waggon and the cart,
 That now from isle to isle maintain the trade,
 And where the surface hunting dolphin led 45
 Her sporting young is now an area fit
 For the wild school-boy's pastime.

Mean-time the ev'ning skies, crusted with ice,
 Shifting from red to black their weighty skirts,
 Hang mournful o'er the hills, and stealing night 50
 Rides the bleak puffing winds, that seem to spit
 Their foam sparse thro' the welkin, which is nothing
 If not beheld. Anon the burden'd heav'n
 Shakes from its ample sieve the boulded snow,
 That flutt'ring down besprinkles the sad trees 55
 In mockery of leaves, piles up the hills
 To monstrous attitude, and chokes to the lips
 The deep impervious vales that yawn as low
 As to the centre, Nature's vasty breaches,
 While all the pride of men and mortal things 60
 Lies whelm'd in heav'n's white ruins.—

The shiv'ring clown digs his obstructed way
 Thro' the snow-barricad'd cottage door,
 And muffled in his home-spun plaid encounters
 With livid cheeks and rheum-distilling nose 65
 The morning's sharp and scouring breath to count
 His starving flock, whose number is all too short
 To make the goodly sum of yester-night ;
 Part deep ingurgitated, part yet struggling,
 With their last pantings melt themselves a grave 70
 In Winter's bosom, which yields not to the touch
 Of the pale languid crescent of this world,

That now with lean and churlish husbandry
 Yields heartlessly the remnants of his prime,
 And like most spendthrifts starves his latter days 75
 For former rankness. He with bleary eye
 Blazons his own disgrace, the harness'd waste
 Rebellious to his blunt defeated shafts,
 And idly strikes the chalky mountains' tops
 That rise to kiss the welkin's ruddy lips, 80
 Where all the rash young bullies of the air
 Mount their quick slender penetrating wings,
 Whipping the frost-burnt villagers to the bones,
 And growing with their motion mad and furious,
 Till swoln to tempests they outrage the thunder, 85
 Winnow the chaffy snow, and mock the skies
 E'en with their own artillery retorted,
 Tear up and throw th' accumulated hills
 Into the vallies: and as rude hurricanes
 Discharged from the wind-swoln cheeks of heav'n
 Buoy up the swelling skirts of Araby's 91
 Inhospitable wilds,
 And roll the dusty desert thro' the skies,
 Choking the liberal air, and smothering
 Whole caravans at once, such havoc spreads 95
 This war of heav'n and earth, such sudden ruin
 Visits their houseless citizens, that shrink
 In the false shelter of the hills together,
 And hear the tempest howling o'er their heads
 That by and by o'erwhelm them. The very birds, 100
 Those few that troop'd not with the chiming tribe
 Of am'rous Summer, quit their russian element,
 And with domestic tameness hop and flutter
 Within the roofs of persecuting man.
 (Grown hospitable by like sense of suff'rance) 105
 Whither the hinds, the debt of the day discharg'd,
 From kiln or barn repairing, shut the door
 On surly Winter, crowd the clean-swept hearth
 And cheerful shining fire, and doff the time,
 The whilst the maids their twirling spindles ply 110
 With musty legends and ear-pathing tales
 Of giants and black necromantic bards,

IMITATIONS.

81

Of air-built castles, feats of mad-cap knights,
 And ev'ry hollow fiction of romance,
 And as their rambling humour leads them talk 115
 Of prodigies and things of dreadful utterance
 That set them all agape, rouse up their hair,
 And make the idiot drops start from their eyes;
 Of church yards belching flames at dead of night,
 Of walking statues, ghosts unaffable 120
 Hunting the dark waste tow'r of airless dungeon,
 Then of the elves that dextly trip the green,
 Drinking the summer's moon-light from the flow'rs,
 And all the toys that Phantasy pranks up
 T' amuse her fools withal.—Thus they lash on 125
 The snail-pac'd Hyperborean nights till heav'n
 Hangs with a juster poize, when the murk clouds
 Roll'd up in heavy wreaths low-bellying seem
 To kiss the ground, and all the waste of snow dropsy
 Looks blue beneath 'em, till plump'd with bloating 230
 Beyond the bounds and stretch of continence
 They burst at once; down pours the hoarded rain,
 Washing the slipp'ry winter from the hills,
 And floating all the vallies. The fading scene
 Melts like a lost enchantment or vain phantasm 135
 That can no more abuse; Nature resumes
 Her old substantial shape, while from the waste
 Of undistinguishing calamity
 Forests, and by their sides, wide skirted plains,
 Houses and trees, arise, and waters flow, 140
 That from their dark confinements bursting, spurn
 Their brittle chains, huge sheets of loosen'd ice
 Float on their bosoms to the deep, and jar
 And clatter as they pass; th' o'er jutting banks,
 As long unpractis'd to so steep a view, 145
 Seem to look dizzy on the moving pomp.

Now ev'ry petty brook that crawld along
 Railing its pebbles mocks the river's rage
 Like the proud frog i' the fable. The huge Danube,
 While melting mountains rush into its tide, 150
 Rolls with such headstrong and unreined course
 As it would choke the Euxine's gulfy maw,

Bursting his crystal cerements. The breathing time
 Of peace expir'd that hush'd the deaf'ning scenes
 Of clam'rous indignation, ruffian War 155
 Rebels, and Nature stands at odds again :
 When the rous'd Furies of the fighting winds
 Torment the main, that swells its angry sides
 And churns the foam betwixt its flinty jaws,
 While thro' the savage dungeon of the night 160
 The horrid thunder growls : th' ambitious waves
 Assault the skies, and from the bursting clouds
 Drink the glib lightning, as if the seas
 Would quench the ever-burning fires of heav'n ;
 Strait from their slipp'ry pomp they madly plunge 165
 And kiss the lowest pebbles. Wretched they
 That 'midst such rude vexation of the deep
 Guide a frail vessel ! better ice-bound still,
 Than mock'd with liberty thus be resign'd
 To the rough fortune of the froward time, 170
 When navigation all a-tiptoe stands
 On such unsteady footing. Now they mount
 On the tall billow's top, and seem to jowl
 Against the stars, whence (dreadful eminence !)
 They see with swimming eyes (enough to hurry round
 In endless vertigo the dizzy brain) 176
 A gulf that swallows vision with wide mouth
 Steep-yawning to receive them ; down they duck
 To the rugged bottom of the main, and view
 The adamantine gates of vaulted hell ; 180
 Thence tofs'd to light again, till borne adrift
 Against some icy mountain's bulging sides
 They reel, and are no more.—Nor less by land
 Ravage the winds that in their wayward rage
 Howl thro' the wide unhospitable glens, 185
 That rock the stable planted tow'rs, and shake
 The hoary monuments of ancient time
 Down to their flinty bases, that engage
 As they would tear the mountains from their roots,
 And brush the high heav'ns with their woody heads, 190
 Making the stout oaks bow.—But I forget
 That sprightly Ver trips on old Winter's heel.

Cease we these notes, too tragic for the time,
 Nor jar against great Nature's symphony,
 When ev'n the blust'rous elements grow tuneful 195
 Or listen to the concert. Hark ! how loud
 The cuckoo wakes the solitary wood !
 Soft sighs the winds as o'er the greens they stray,
 And murmur'ing brooks within their channels play.

PROGNE'S DREAM.

*Darkly expressive of some past Events that were soon to
 be revealed to her.*

—————LAST night I dream'd,
 (Whate'er it may forbode it moves me strangely)
 That I was rapt into the raving deep :
 An old and rev'rend fire conducted me ;
 He plung'd into the bosom of the main, 5
 And bad me not to fear but follow him.
 I follow'd ; with impetuous speed we divid,
 And heard the dashing thunder o'er our heads.
 Many a slip 'ry fathom down we sunk,
 Beneath all plummet's sound, and reach'd the bottom. 10
 When there I ask'd my venerable guide
 If he could tell me where my sister was ?
 He told me that she lay not far from thence,
 Within the bosom of a flinty rock,
 Where Neptune kept her for his paramour 15
 Hid from the jealous Amphitrite's sight,
 And said he could conduct me to the place.
 I begg'd he wou'd. Thro' dreadful ways we pass'd,
 'Twixt rocks that frightfully lower'd on either side,
 Whence here and there the branching coral sprung, 20
 O'er dead men's bones we walk'd, o'er heaps of gold and
 Into a hideous kind of wilderness, [gems,
 Where stood a stern and prison looking rock,
 Daub'd with a mossy verdure all around,
 The mockery of paint. As we drew near 25
 Out sprung a hydra from a den below,

A speckled Fury ; fearfully it hiss'd,
 And roll'd its sea-green eyes so angrily
 As it wou'd kill with looking. My old guide
 Against its sharp head hurl'd a rugged stone— 30
 The curling monster rais'd a brazen shriek,
 Wallow'd, and dy'd in fitful agonies.
 We gain'd the cave. Thro' woven adamant
 I look'd, and saw my sister all alone :
 Employ'd she seem'd in writing something sad, 35
 So sad she look'd. Her cheek was wond'rous wan ;
 Her mournful locks like weary sedges hung.
 I call'd—she turning started when she saw me,
 And threw her head aside as if ashamed.
 She wept, but would not speak—I call'd again : 40
 Still she was mute—Then madly I address'd,
 With all the lion-sinews of despair,
 To break the flinty ribs that held me out,
 And with the struggling wak'd.—



BRITISH

 MUSEUM

A STORM.

Rais'd to account for the late return of a Messenger.

———THE sun went down in wrath,
 The skies foam'd brass, and soon th' unchained winds
 Burst from the howling dungeon of the north,
 And rais'd such high delirium on the main,
 Such angry clamour, while such boiling waves 5
 Flash'd on the peevish eye of moody night,
 It look'd as if the seas would scald the heav'ns:
 Still louder chid the winds, th' enchas'd surge
 Still answer'd louder, and when the sickly Morn
 Peep'd ruefully thro' the bloated thick-brow'd east
 To view the ruinous havoc of the dark 11
 The stately tow'rs of Athens seem'd to stand
 On hollow foam tide whipt: the ships that lay
 Scorning the blast within the marble arms
 Of the sea-chid Portumnus danc'd like corks 15
 Upon th' enraged deep, kicking each other,
 And some were dash'd to fragments in this fray
 Against the harbour's rocky chest: the sea
 So roar'd, so madly rag'd, so proudly swell'd,
 As it would thunder full into the streets, 20
 And steep the tall Cecropian battlements
 In foaming brine: the airy citadel,
 Perch'd like an eagle on a high-brow'd rock,
 Shook the salt water from its stubborn sides
 With eager quaking: the Cyclades appear'd 25
 Like ducking cormorants.—Such a munity
 Outclamor'd all tradition, and gain'd belief
 To ranting prodigies of heretofore.
 Sev'n days it storm'd, &c. 29

AN IMITATION

OF SPENSER,

*Written at Mr. Thomson's desire, to be inserted into
The Castle of Indolence.*

I

FULL many a fiend did haunt this house of rest,
And made of passive wights an easy prey.
Here lethargy, with deadly sleep oppress,
Stretch'd on his back a mighty lubbard lay,
Heaving his sides, and snored night and day :
To stir him from his trance it was not eath,
And his half-open'd eyne he shut straightway :
He led I ween the softest way to death,
And taught withouten pain or strife to yield the breath.

II.

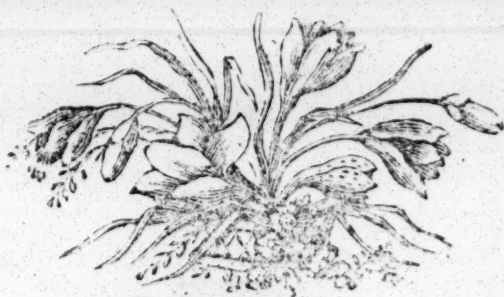
Of limbs enormous, but withal unsound, 10
Soft-swoln and pale, here lay the Hydropsie ;
Unwieldy man ! with belly monstrous round,
For ever fed with watery supply,
For still he drank, and yet he still was dry.
And here a moping mystery did sit, 15
Mother of Spleen, in ropes of various dye ;
She call'd herself the Hypochondriac Fit,
And frantick seem'd to some, to others seem'd a wit.

III.

A lady was she whimsical and proud,
Yet oft' thro' fear her pride would crouchen low ; 20
She felt or fancy'd in her flutt'ring mood
All the diseases that the spitals know,
And sought all physic that the shops bestow,
And still new leaches and new drugs would try :
'Twas hard to hit her humour high or low, 25
For sometimes she would laugh, and sometimes cry,
Sometimes would waxen wroth, and all she knew not why.

IV.

Fast by her side a listless virgin pin'd
With aking head and squeamish heart burnings ;
Pale, bloated, cold, she seem'd to hate mankind, 30
But lov'd in secret all forbidden things.
And here the Tertian shook his chilling wings ;
And here the Gout, half tiger, half a snake,
Rag'd with an hundred teeth, an hundred stings.
These and a thousand Furies more did shake 35
Those weary realms, and kept ease-loving men awake.



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